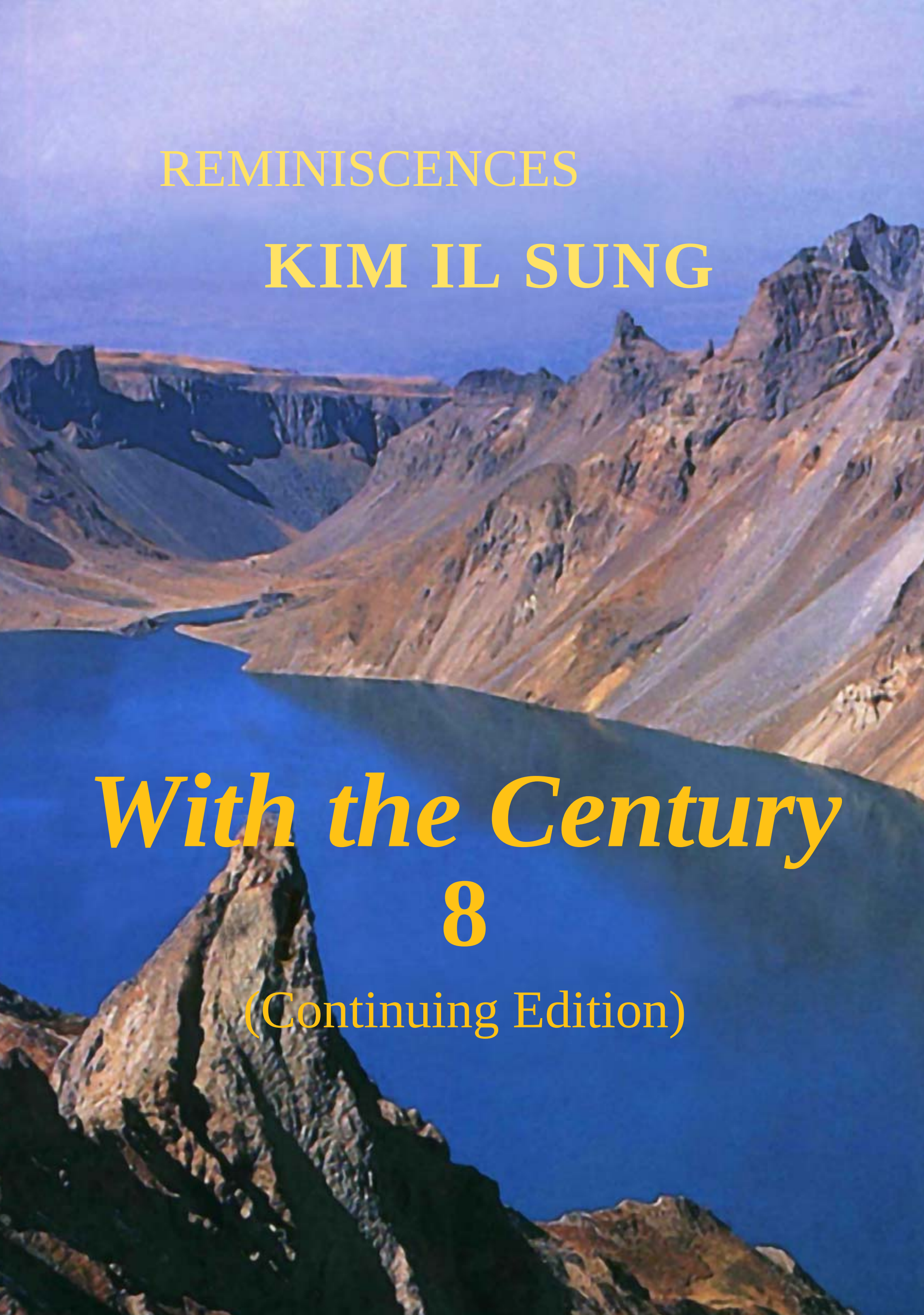


REMINISCENCES

# KIM IL SUNG

# *With the Century*

# 8

(Continuing Edition)

REMINISCENCES

# KIM IL SUNG

# *With the Century*

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(Continuing Edition)

FOREIGN LANGUAGES PUBLISHING HOUSE
PYONGYANG, KOREA
Juche 87 (1998)

# The great leader Comrade Kim Il Sung will always be with us



# Part I

# THE ANTI-JAPANESE REVOLUTION

# 8

The great leader Comrade Kim Il Sung devoted his whole life solely to the motherland and to his people, and to the revolutionary cause of the working class, bearing the destinies of the country and nation on his shoulders, since he embarked on the revolutionary struggle in his early years.

Kim Jong Il



**General Kim Il Sung, hero for all times, who led the anti-Japanese revolution to victory and liberated the country**



**KPRA soldiers preparing for action**




**The magazine, *Samcholli*, January Showa 16 (1941), carrying a letter advising surrender written by traitors to the nation**

# The Xiaohaerbaling Conference

August 10-11, Juche29 (1940)



**The tent in which Comrade Kim Il Sung stayed during the Xiaohaerbaling conference**

At the conference Comrade Kim Il Sung put forward new strategic tasks to hasten the final victory of the anti-Japanese armed struggle and to meet the great event of national liberation with full preparations.

# Secret Bases in the Homeland during the Days of Small-Unit Actions

Sambongsan





Son Thae Chun



Changphyong



Kuwolsan







Kim Hyok Chol



Chosan and Wiwon



Kim Hak Song

Yangdok



**The Headquarters in Mt. Paektu**

**Porojisan (temporary)**





**Han Chang Bong**



**Kim Pyong Sik**

**Huchiryong**





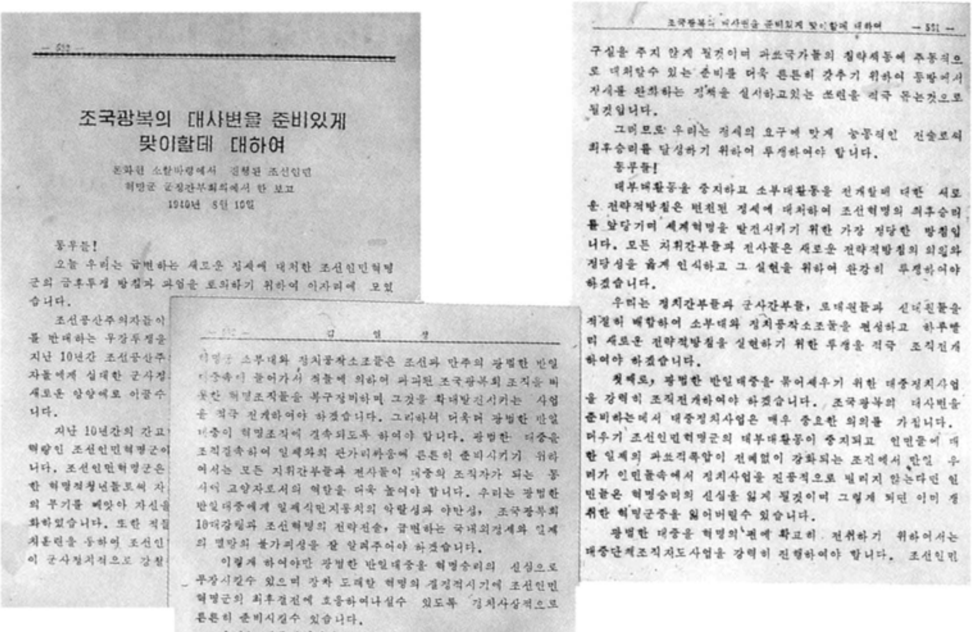
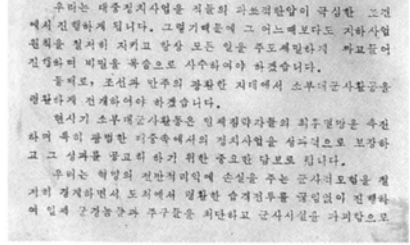
**Wonthongsan (temporary)**



**Haramsan**



**Ponghwangsan (temporary)**

조국광복의 대사변을 준비있게 맞이할데 대하여

혼화현 소할바령에서 진행된 조선인민혁명군 군정간부회의에서 한 보고

1940년 8월 10일

동무들!

오늘 우리는 급변하는 새로운 정세에 대처한 조선인민혁명군의 금후투쟁 방침과 과업을 토의하기 위하여 이자리에 모였습니다.

The report Comrade Kim Il Sung made at the Xiaohaerbaling conference



O Paek Ryong



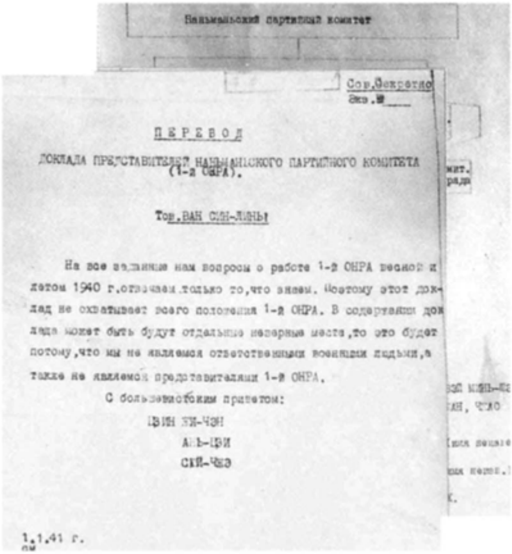
**A confidential Japanese document on Comrade Kim Il Sung's dispatch of political worker groups to important places in Korea and Japan** (Security Police Bureau of the Ministry of the Interior, October 14, Showa 16 (1941).)



An Kil



So Chol



Нань-маньский партийный комитет

Сов. Секретно
Экз. №

ПЕРЕВОД

ДОКЛАДА ПРЕДСТАВИТЕЛЕЙ НАНЬ-МАНЬСКОГО ПАРТИЙНОГО КОМИТЕТА (1-я ОНРА).

Тов. ВАН СИН-ЛИНЬ!

На все заданные нам вопросы о работе 1-й ОНРА весной и летом 1940 г. отвечаем только то, что знаем. Поэтому этот доклад не охватывает всего положения 1-й ОНРА. В содержании доклада может быть будут отдельные неверные места, то это будет потому, что мы не являемся ответственными военными людьми, а также не являемся представителями 1-й ОНРА.

С большевистским приветом:

ЦЗИН ?-ЧЭН

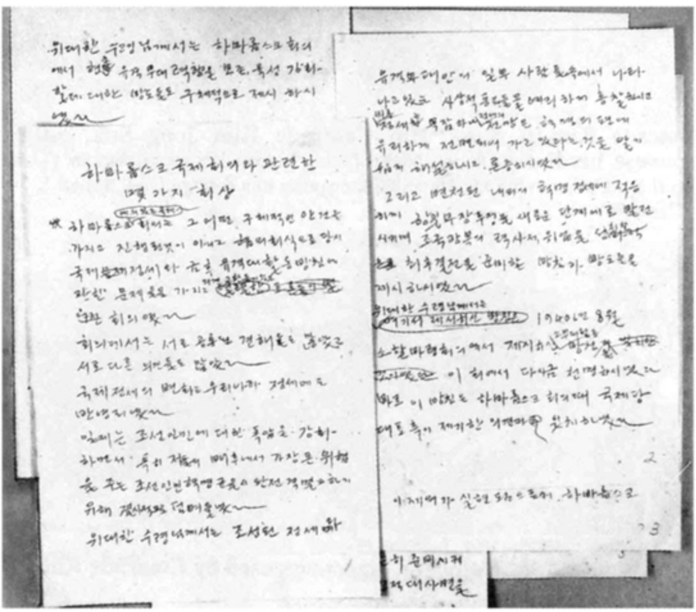
АНЬ-ЦЗИ

СИЙ-ЧЭО

1.1.41 г.

The report dated January 1, 1941, on the work of the South Manchuria Provincial Party Committee (the 1st Route Army) Comarde Kim Il Sung submitted to the Comintern during the Khabarovsk conference

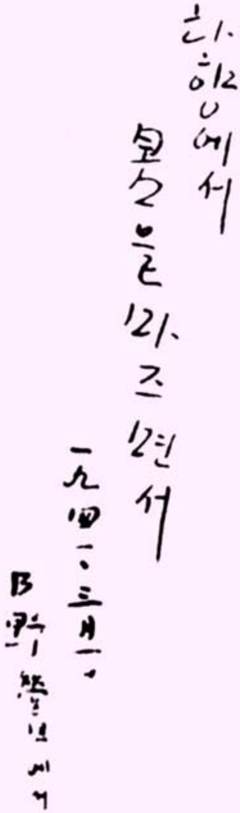
# The Khabarovsk Conference Convened by the Comintern
## December 1940-March 1941



하바롭스크 국제회의와 관련한 몇가지 회상

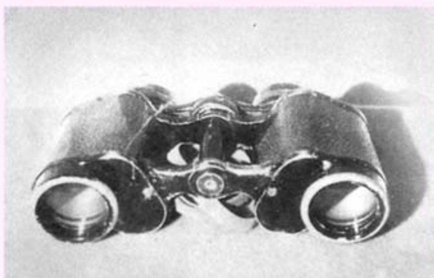
A reminiscence of So Chol, who participated in the Khabarovsk conference






**Comrade Kim Il Sung with Comrade Kim Jong Suk, an anti-Japanese heroine. On the back of the photo is an inscription in Comrade Kim Il Sung's handwriting: "Greeting the spring in a foreign land, March 1, 1941. At Camp B"**





**Pistol and binoculars used by Comrade Kim Il Sung**

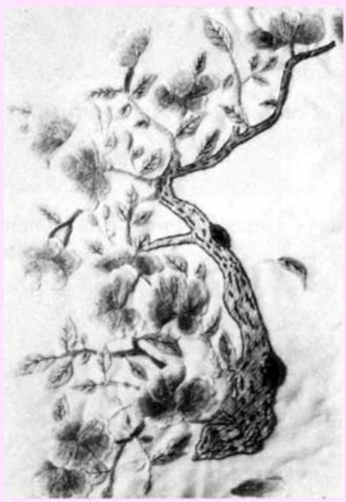


**Comrade Kim Il Sung (middle in the second row) with other soldiers of the KPRA**





**Pistol and cooking utensil used by Comrade Kim Jong Suk**

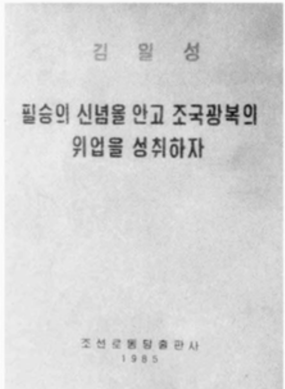


**A handkerchief on which women guerrillas embroidered a map of Korea with a rose of Sharon motif**

# Small-Unit Actions Making a Break-through in the Operations against Japan



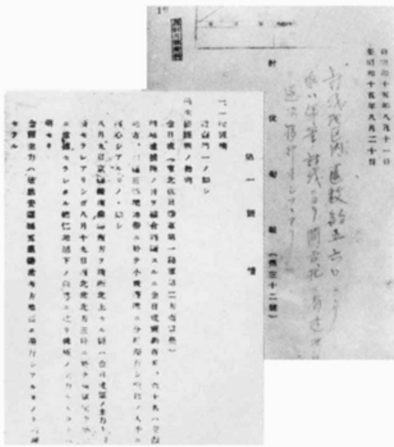
Comrade Kim Il Sung during the small-unit actions




**The speech Comrade Kim Il Sung delivered at the Jiapigou meeting**



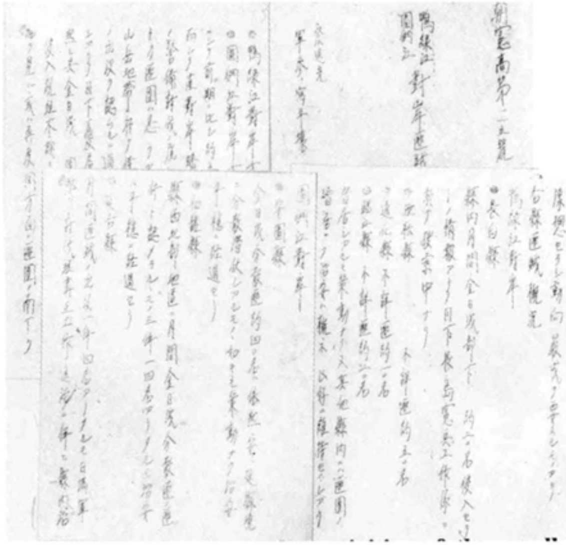
**Battle site on the estuary of the Tuman River**



**Japanese documents on the small-unit actions** (Ten-day Report on Punitive Operations, August Showa 15 (1940).)



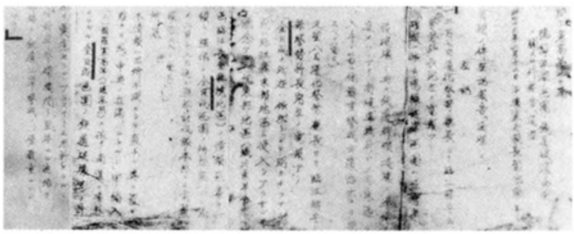
**Kim Il**



**Japanese documents on the activities of the small unit led by Comrade Kim Il Sung** (Headquarters of the Japanese gendarmerie in Korea, February Showa 16 (1941).)



**Yonbong, Saeppyol County, where Comrade Kim Il Sung led the activities of small units and groups**



**A Japanese document on an attempt to destroy a railway line**



**An Yong and the diary which he kept during the small-unit actions**



**A note written by Ryu Kyong Su**

# In the Raging Whirlwind of Aggressive War

Conclusion of the three-way military alliance of Japan, Germany and Italy, and the communique of the meeting



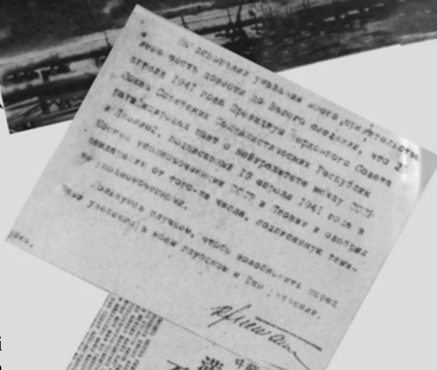





The Japanese army's surprise attack on Pearl Harbour



A cartoon showing Nazi Germany's aggression against the Soviet Union






The document of the neutrality pact between the Soviet Union and Japan and a newspaper report on it



Forced labour done by Koreans drafted to Japan



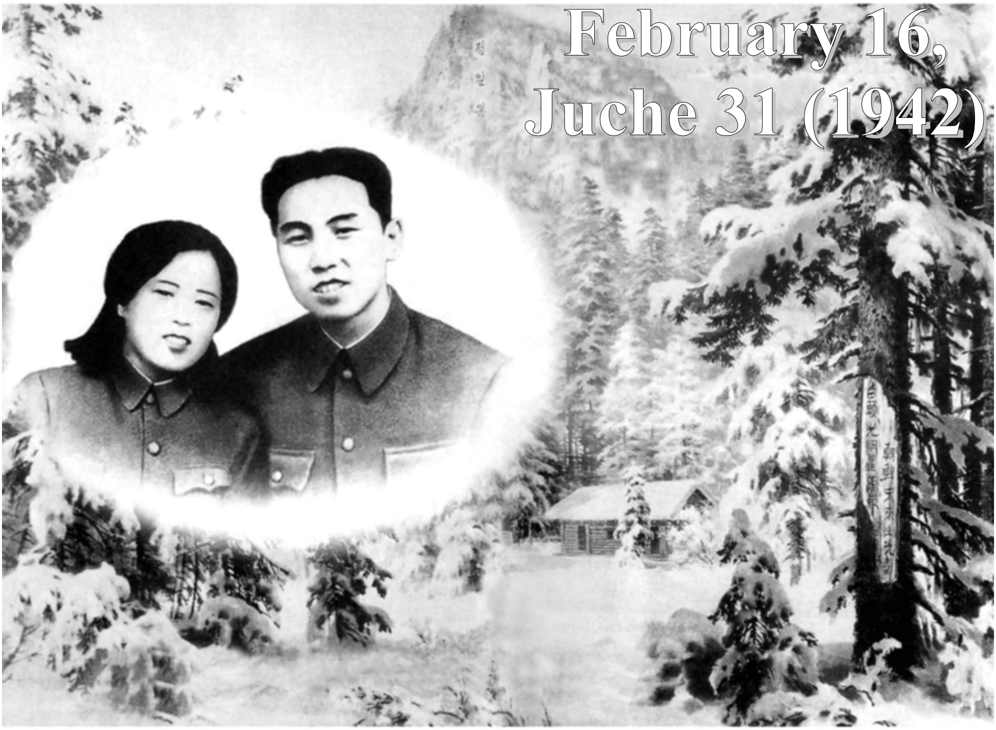
A cliff in Hokkaido, Japan, from which Korean women threw themselves in resistance to the Japanese imperialists



Korean patriots imprisoned by the Japanese imperialists

About 200,000 Korean women were drafted as comfort women for the Japanese aggressor army

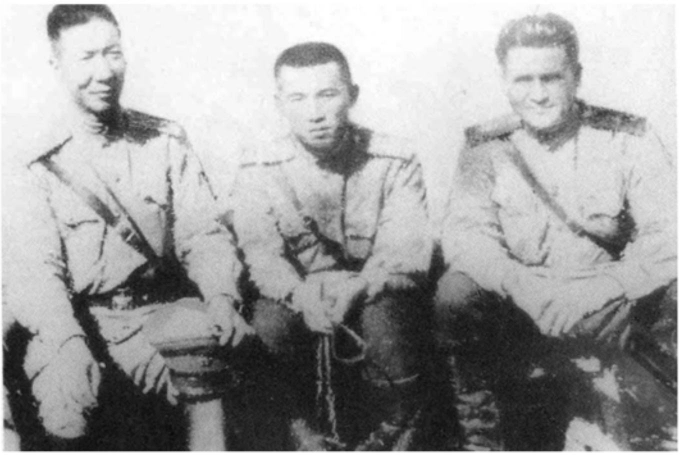





**Mt. Paektu is my native place.**

KIM JONG IL

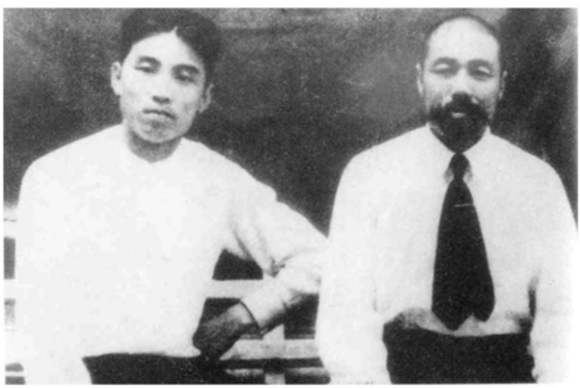
# Formation of the International Allied Forces



**Comrade Kim Il Sung with his comrades-in-arms in the IAF in October Juche 32 (1943)** (Zhou Bao-zhong on the left and Sirinsky on the right)



**Apanasenko**



**Comrade Kim Il Sung with Chai Shi-rong**



Kim Chaek



Kang Kon



Kim Kyong Sok



Choe Yong Jin



Ryu Kyong Su



The Headquarters
of the IAF



Road to the training base at Byatskoe



A small unit of the IAF



Pak Rak Kwon



Choe Hyon





Trenches where the soldiers of the KPRA underwent tactical training and the Amur River



**Zhang Shou-jian**



**Feng Zhong-yun**



**Chen Lei, a former commander of the IAF, meeting Comrade Kim Il Sung**



朝鮮總督府
高等法院檢事局思想部

思想彙報續刊

(昭和十八年)

コミンテルンの解消と今後の見透

**A Japanese official document on the disbandment of the Comintern**

# Let Us Strengthen the Motive Force of the Korean Revolution in Every Way



조선혁명가들은 조선을 잘 알아야 한다

1. 조국에 대한 학습을 잘할데 대하여

2. 당면한 몇가지 과업에 대하여

**A speech Comrade Kim Il Sung delivered before the political cadres and political instructors of the KPRA**



**Soldiers of the KPRA engaging in military and political studies**



Soldiers of the KPRA on manoeuvres



Rim Chun Chu



Jo Jong Chol



Wireless equipment used during small-unit actions



Jon Chang Chol



Ri Pong Su



A scene from a drama performance by the IAF

# With the Women Guerrillas



Comrade Kim Jong Suk (second from the right) with other women guerrillas



Kim Ok Sun



Pak Kyong Suk



Ho Chang Suk



Kim Myong Suk



Ri Suk Jong



Kim Song Ok



Pak Kyong Ok



Wang Ok Hwan



Jon Sun Hui



Ri Yong Suk

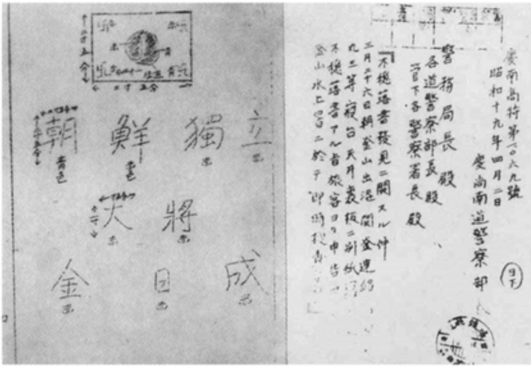


Ri Kye Hyang

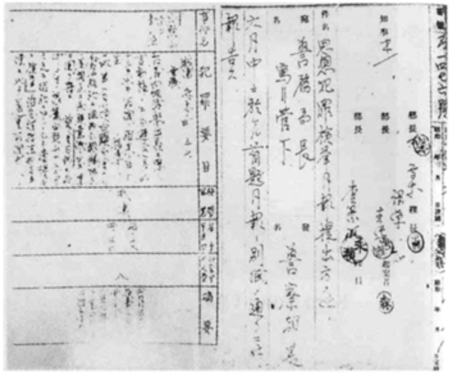


Jong Man Gum

# The Flames of All-People Resistance (1)




An official Japanese document on the people's reverence for Comrade Kim Il Sung as the sun of the nation



A North Hamgyong provincial police department document on the Paektusan Association in Songjin



A confidential document of the Niigata prefectural police department on the activities of the Kim Il Sung Corps



Min Tok Won



Jo Tong Uk



An official Japanese document on preparations by patriotic young people in Seoul for an amed revolt



Kim Wong Ju



Choe Kyong Min

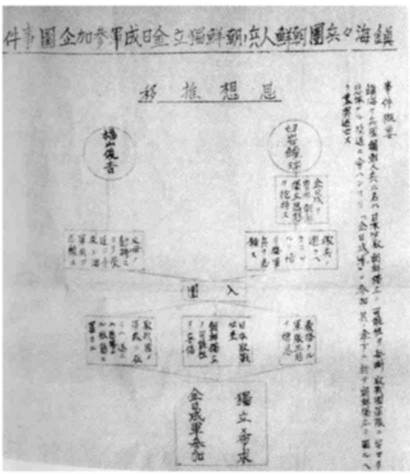


朝鮮解放團의反日血鬪記

二百余名의朝鮮解放決死隊

金日成將軍과連絡

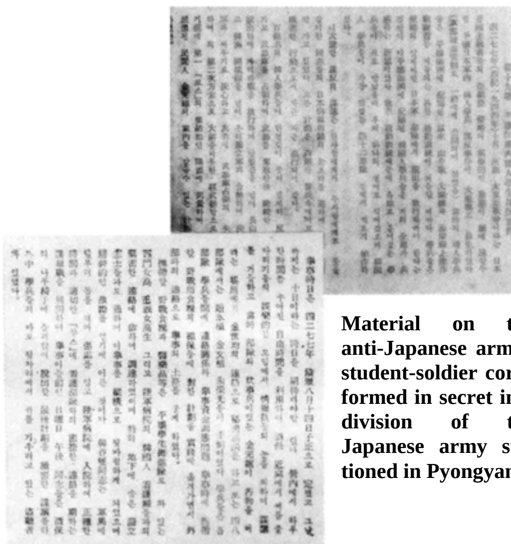
The *Pyongyang Minbo* reported the activities of the National Liberation Corps formed by Comrade Kim Won Ju, an anti-Japanese revolutionary fighter (November Juche 34 (1945).)



鎮海々兵団朝鮮人兵ノ朝鮮独立金日成軍参加企図事件

思想推移

An official Japanese document on the struggle of young Korean men in the naval force at Jinhae



Material on the anti-Japanese armed student-soldier corps formed in secret in a division of the Japanese army stationed in Pyongyang

# The Flames of All-People Resistance (2)



Kim Pong Sok





An official Japanese document on the struggle of the workers of the Pyongyang Ironworks



Ri Chol Su



Choe Il



Kkachibong, Wonsan-ri, Hoeryong County, where an armed corps was active



NEW YORK TIMES, SATURDAY, JULY 18, 1942.

KOREANS DAMAGE BIG JAPANESE BASE

Workers Kill 142 of Air Force in Attack on Quelpart, at Entrance to Yellow Sea

PATRIOT UPRISINGS GO ON

National Front Federation Here Gets Reports of Activities and Tokyo Reprisals

Special to THE NEW YORK TIMES.

WASHINGTON, July 17—Continuing active revolt in Korea against the Japanese resulted in heavy destruction to a Japanese air base on the Island of Quelpart, or Saishu, late in March, according to word just received here by the Korean National Front Federation and made public today.

Quelpart Island is off the southern tip of the Korean Peninsula and commands the Strait of Korea and the entrance to the Yellow Sea.

On March 29, according to the reports, a force of Korean workers on the island attacked the air base. They destroyed the wireless station and set fire to four underground hangars. In the attack 142 Japanese pilots and mechanics were killed and another 200 burned or wounded.

Two gasoline storage tanks and sixty-nine planes were also destroyed. The Japanese later killed all of the 400 Koreans who survived the fighting.

On March 1, the reports said, Koreans dynamited three power plants in Northern Korea.

These and other activities were said to have prompted heavy reprisals by the Japanese. About 125,000 Koreans were killed, wounded or arrested during February and March and 750,000 more were forced to work in labor battalions.

"In February and March about 950 Koreans were arrested in Osaka, Kobe, Yokohama and Tokyo," the Korean Federation reported.

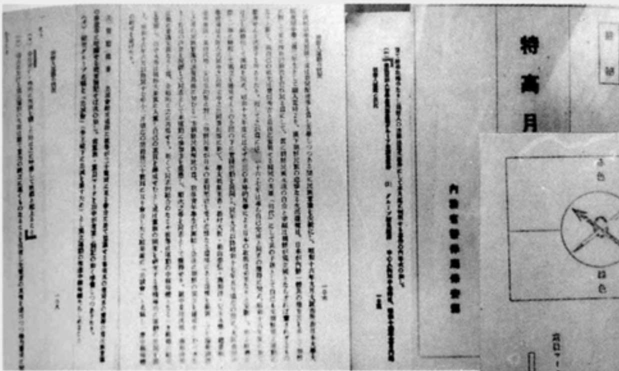
"Vigilance over the Koreans has been so intensified in Japan that no Koreans are permitted to be on the streets after 8 P. M.

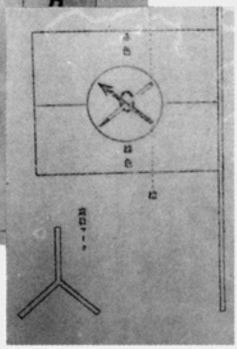
"There are 980,000 Koreans in Japan proper, of whom 189,000 were employed in defense works as of November, 1941."

HIGH OFFICIALS OUT IN BRAZILIAN SHIFT

Justice, Propaganda and Police

The *New York Times* reported the revolt of the Koreans at the Japanese air base on Jeju Island



**A Japanese police document on the activities of the Loyalty Association, a national resistance organization, formed in Osaka, Japan** (*Monthly Report* by the Special Political Police, December Showa 18 (1943).)

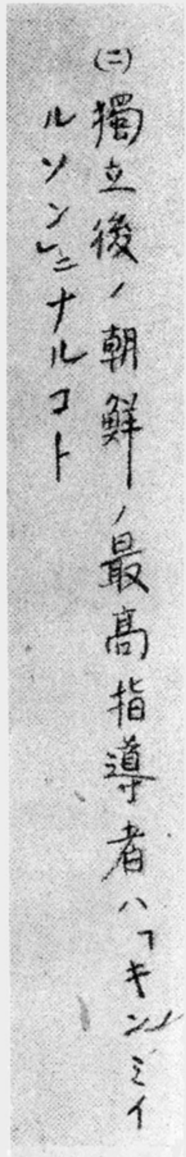




***Taegangbaekjaryong* and *Kumranjigyejon*, propaganda materials of an organization of the ARF**




**A Japanese publication on Comrade Kim Il Sung's making preparations for liberating Korea by the efforts of the Koreans themselves**

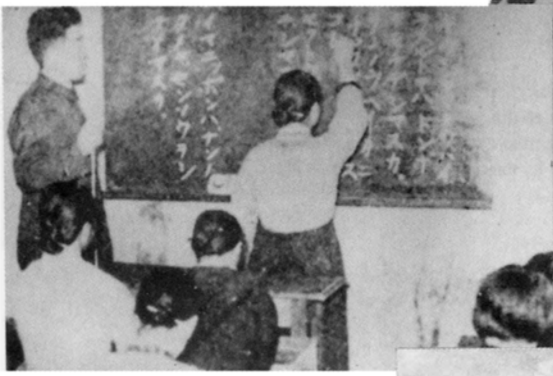



**Japanese material on the Korean people's reverence for Comrade Kim Il Sung**

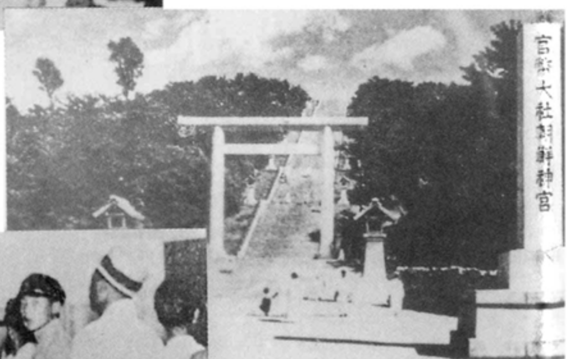
# Japanese Imperialist Machinations to Obliterate the Korean Nation



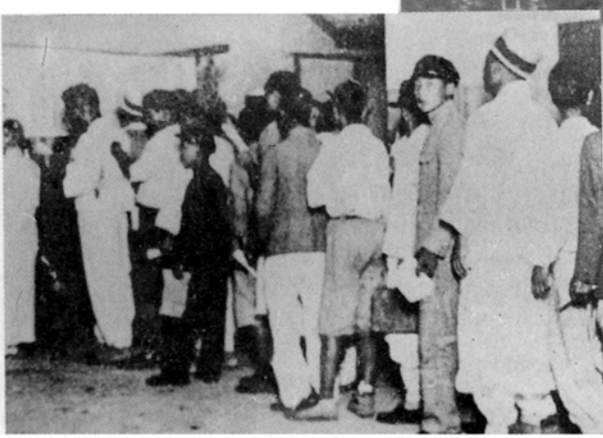

**Japanese imperialists forcing Koreans to speak Japanese in any place**



**Countrywomen forced to learn Japanese**




**A Shinto shrine at which Koreans were forced to worship Japanese deities**



**Seoul citizens being forced to change their names to Japanese ones**




An inscription in Kim Ku's handwriting:
"Build the Country Conscientiously"



Hong Myong Hui



Ho Hon



Kim Ku



Han Ryong Un



Paek Nam Un



Ri Kuk Ro



한글 마춤법 통일안

A plan for unifying Korean spelling published by the Korean Language Association



Ri Yun Jae



**An aeroplane of the Japanese Air Force shot down in flames**



**A Soviet soldier hoisting the Soviet flag over the Reichstag–**the defeat of Nazi Germany accelerated the end of Japanese militarism.





**The Japanese suffered defeat after defeat in the Pacific Ocean**



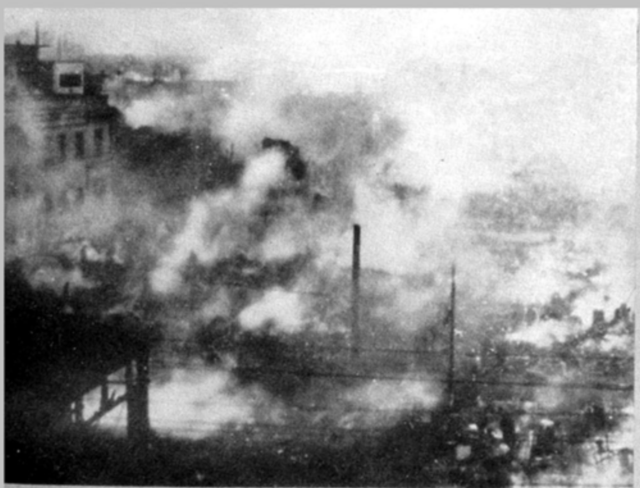




**The Japanese make desperate efforts to salvage their defeats**



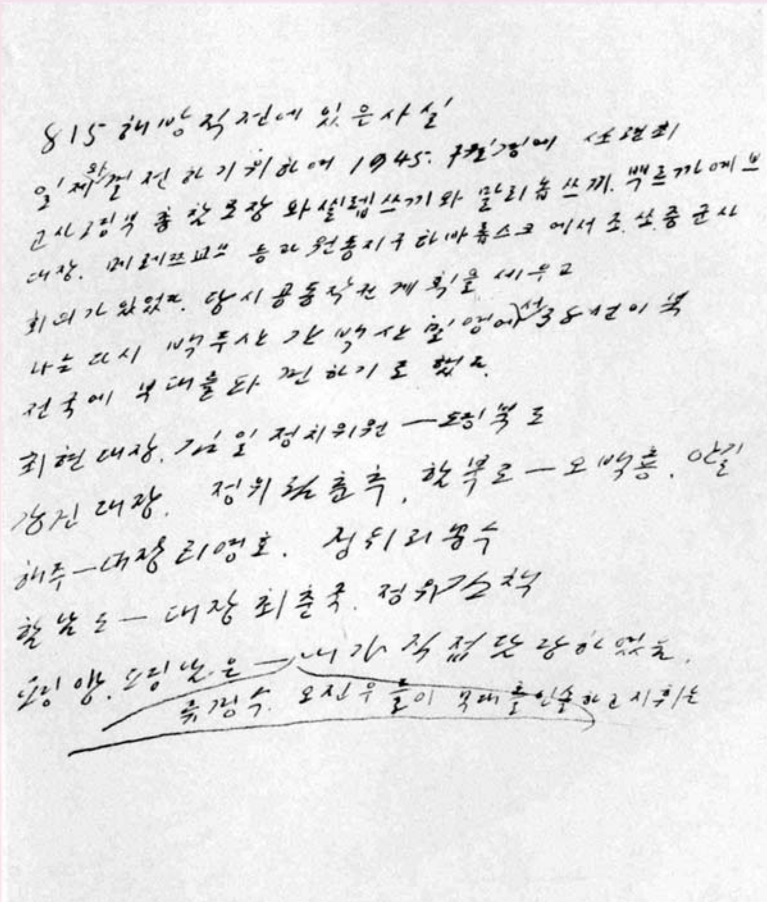
**The Potsdam conference**



**A city in Japan being bombed**

# The Japanese Imperialists Rush Headlong to Their Doom

# The Final Campaign for Liberating the Fatherland



**Comrade Kim Il Sung’s note on his instructions on the operations for the final assault to liberate the country**

명　　　령

조국해방을 위한 총공격전을 개시할데 대하여

1945년 8월 9일

조선인민혁명군 각 부대들과 전체 

우리 민족이 일일천추로 갈망하던 
을 성취할 결정적시각이 목전에 도래하

이미 파쑈독일을 격멸한 쏘련군은 
기 위하여 선전포고를 하였다. 쏘
극동의 정치군사정세를 근본적으로 변경
민족이 조국광복위업을 성취하는데 유리
것이다.

나는 이 엄숙하고 결정적인 시각에 
대들과 전체 지휘관, 병사들에게 다음과

첫째, 전체 조선인민혁명군 지휘관
주의침략자들을 조국강토에서 완전히 격
결전에 총출동할것이다.

전체 지휘관, 병사들은 일본군대와
용감성을 높이 발휘하라! 조국강토를 겨
강도 일본제국주의침략자들을 한놈도 남
에게 무자비한 복수의 철추를 내리라!



둘째, 국내에서 활동하고있는 조선인민혁명군 소부대, 소조 성원들과 정치공작원들, 혁명조직성원들은 조선인민혁명군의 총공격전에 호응하여 도처에서 전민중의 반일항쟁을 조직전개할것이다. 로동자, 농민을 비롯한 전체 반일대중을 일제와의 최후결전에 불러일으키고 그들을 승리의 길, 혁혁한 위훈의 길로 인도하라!

셋째, 국내에서 활동하고있는 조선인민혁명군 소부대와 인민무장조직들은 조선인민혁명군의 총공격에 합세하여 적의 배후에 대한 타격전을 과감히 전개할것이다. 소부대와 인민무장조직들은 적의 군대와 군사대상물을 공격소탕하며 적들의 지휘체계를 마비시키고 놈들을 혼란과 수세에 몰아넣으라!

넷째, 조선인민혁명군 정치일군들은 대원들을 원쑤격멸의 성전에로 적극 불러일으키며 해방지역 인민들속에서 정치사업을 강화하여 그들이 자신의 손으로 자치기관들을 창설하고 반동들의 책동을 분쇄하며 치안유지와 사회질서수립에 한결같이 떨쳐나서게 할것이다.

조선인민혁명군 전체 지휘관, 병사들!

조국해방성전에서 혁혁한 전과와 전투적위훈을 떨치라!

나는 조선인민혁명군 각 부대들과 전체 지휘관, 병사들이 간악한 일제식민지통치를 종식시키고 조국광복의 력사적위업을 빛나게 성취하리라는것을 확신한다.

승리는 우리의것이다.

항일전의 최후승리를 위하여 총진군하자!

**Comrade Kim Il Sung's orders dated August 9, 1945:** ***On Launching a General Offensive to Liberate the Homeland***




**These slogans written on trees deal with the three-point line for liberating the fatherland and the order for the final offensive**

# Great Victory in the Anti-Japanese Revolution



**Publications reporting on the military strength of the KPRA, that won victory in the war against Japan**



**The site of the Battle of Manhyang Pass**



**Chongjin Port**



**Landing site in Rajin**



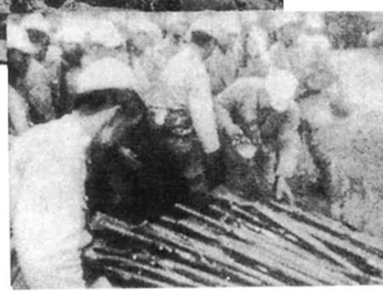
**Sonbong Port**

**The sites where the advance troops of the KPRA fought battles to make a breakthrough in the final campaign against Japan**


ПРАВДА
Орган Центрального Комитета КПСС
В ДРУЖЕСТВЕННОЙ ОБСТАНОВКЕ
조선에서의 수기



**The soldiers of the KPRA and the Soviet army cheer their victory**



**Japanese soldiers laying down their arms**

# The Triumphant Return Home of General Kim Il Sung, the Sun of the Nation




**Rejoicing over national liberation**





**Patriots released from prisons in Seoul and Tokyo**

**Comrade Kim Il Sung making a speech at the mass rally held in Pyongyang to welcome his triumphant return**







**Comrade Kim Il Sung meeting his grandmother in Mangyongdae, his native place**



**The Arch of Triumph erected on the 70th birthday of Comrade Kim Il Sung**



錦繡江山을震動시키는四十萬의歡呼聲

市民의感動爆發

偉大한愛國者金日成將軍 參席

平壤市民衆大會盛况



새길신문

**Reports in the newspapers *Pyongyang Minbo* and *Saegil Sinmun* on the trumphant return of Comrade Kim Il Sung and Comrade Kim Jong Suk**



## The Boundless Honour of Having Three Generals of Mt. Paektu



# In the Flames of the Anti-Japanese Revolution



Ju To Il



Kim Jwa Hyok



Jon Mun Uk



Hwang Jong Hae



Sim Yun Gyong



Kang Sang Ho



Ri Ryong Un



Kim Jung Dong



**Comrade Kim Il Sung inspecting the busts of the revolutionary martyrs to be erected in the Revolutionary Martyrs Cemetery**



**O Juk Sun**



**Sim Thae San**



**Choe Jang Man**



**Kim Chol**



**Kim Yu Gil**


Kang Wi Ryong


Kim Ryong Yon


Kim Tae Hong


Yun Thae Hong


Ji Kyong Su


Kong Jong Su


Kim Tuk Su


Jang Sang Ryong



**Kim Chung Ryol**



**Kim Chang Dok**



**Kim Yang Chun**



**Pak U Sop**



**Hyon Chol**



**Choe Min Chol**



**Kim Jun Ik**



**Hwang Jong Ryol**



**Kim Rong Hwa**



**Kim Ryong Gun**



**Ryu Ung Sam**



**Im Chol**



**Jon Pong So**



**Son Myong Jik**



**Sim Chang Sik**



**Ko Thae Bong**



**Ri Chi Ho**



**Ri Pong Rok**



**Choe Song Suk**



**Jon Mun Jin**



**Ko Hyon Suk**



**Ri In Do**



**Jang Hi Suk**



**Kim Hye Sun**



**Kim Pong Ryul**



**So Sun Ok**



**Kim Son**



**Ri Jae Dok**



**Ri Min**



**Ri Jong Ok**



**Kim Pong Rok**

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CHAPTER 22

# Let Us Keep the Revolutionary Flag Flying for Ever



*April–December Juche 29 (1940)*

# 1. At Xiaohaerbaling

The meeting at Xiaohaerbaling was a historic conference that adopted a new strategic policy of hastening the ultimate victory of the anti-Japanese revolution and making full preparations to take the initiative to greet the momentous occasion of national liberation.

This conference was the culmination of the unremitting efforts and unquenchable enthusiasm the great leader Comrade Kim Il Sung had devoted to overcoming difficulties in the national liberation struggle and the communist movement in Korea, and to turning misfortune into blessings, at a time when the anti-Japanese revolution was undergoing trials.

Here, we recollect what the great leader said on many occasions about the preparations for and the proceedings of the conference.

After destroying the "Maeda punitive force" at Hongqihe, we gathered in the forest of Hualazi to sum up the lessons and experience of the struggle of the Korean People's Revolutionary Army (KPRA). We called it a review of a march of 200,000 *ri*. We had, in actual fact, made a march of 50,000 miles.

In order to consolidate the successes we had achieved on the long march and open up a new phase in the revolutionary struggle, we had to do much more work and tread still further along a thorny path. So I stressed, "The basic factor in our success on the long march lay in our political and ideological superiority and our tactics of guerrilla warfare. This is the core significance of our march of 50,000 miles. The present situation is more threatening than ever. Let us apply a variety of guerrilla tactics and techniques with the utmost efficiency in keeping with the prevailing situation and terrain conditions. We must go deep among the people and step up political work among them. We must be resolved to make a longer march than we have already made for the ultimate triumph of the revolution. Let us keep the revolutionary flag flying with a strong determination and unshakable

confidence in the victory of the revolution. In future, too, as in the past, we must take the initiative and strike the enemy hard."

In the spring of 1940, the "Nozoe Punitive Command" was mounting an even more frantic offensive against the KPRA than ever before, deploying more troops and planning "punitive" operations down to every last detail to destroy the revolutionary army.

Nevertheless, we were determined to take the initiative. We had pressed upon the enemy always with the initiative in our own hands, and we were set on maintaining the initiative no matter what changes took place in the situation.

What did we rely on in our determination to maintain the initiative? Our mental power and tactics. In terms of manpower reserves and weapons and equipment, we were inferior to the enemy, but we were far superior in terms of mental power and tactics. The point in question was which side had the advantage in tactics; and we had it.

Until we moved into the valley of Hualazi, the "Nozoe punitive force" had been occupying the local mountains. All the paths that might be taken by the revolutionary army were guarded tenaciously by the enemy.

Although we emphasized the initiative, our situation was extremely unfavourable. Suspecting that his forces in eastern Manchuria were not strong enough, Nozoe was said to be bringing reinforcements from Tonghua. According to O Paek Ryong, the reinforcements had already arrived in the vicinity of Liangbingtai on the border of Yanji and Dunhua Counties. It was also reported that a fresh contingent of reinforcements in the name of a working party had come from the direction of Changbai.

What was to be done to counter the enemy's attempt at stepped-up "punitive" operations?

The enemy's initial, large-scale "punitive" operations, staged in the name of the "special clean-up campaign for maintaining public peace in the southeastern area", had been foiled by our large-unit circling operations. How should the enemy's more frenzied and more tenacious new offensive be thwarted? Should we repeat the large-unit circling operations because these

had been effective? Or should we adopt some other tactics? The flames of war unleashed by Japan and Germany in the East and West, respectively, would envelop the whole world sooner or later, and involve all the major powers and small nations in the conflagration. In anticipation of these developments, we had to rack our brains for a new strategy.

We were faced with the challenge of working out tactical measures to defeat the enemy's "punitive" operations now under way, and also evolving a new strategic line capable of coping with the rapidly-changing situation.

I got down to working out a tactical scheme for overcoming the difficulty that had been created after the Battle of Hongqihe, and also decided to elaborate a new strategic plan.

At that time the enemy had massed all his forces in mountainous areas. The only way to take the initiative in these circumstances was to disperse our forces and slip away into the foothills.

Because the enemy forces were massed in mountainous areas, leaving walled towns and internment villages to be guarded by police forces and Self-defence Corps units, it would be most advantageous for us to harass the enemy behind his lines and compel him to disperse his "punitive" forces.

On the basis of this tactical calculation, the main force of the KPRA slipped away from the secret camp at Hualazi in mid-April 1940, and launched a final campaign to smash the enemy's "special clean-up campaign". We first made simultaneous raids on Dongnancha and Yangcaogou, large internment villages by the Xiaosha River, destroyed the pursuing enemy in the valley of Shujiefeng, and then vanished in the direction of Chechangzi.

The units that had been operating under the command of An Kil and Choe Hyon in the Yanji and Wangqing areas began to harass the enemy in these county centres in response to the movement of the main force.

We fired on several villages, but the enemy showed no tangible reaction.

It was necessary to tempt the enemy with bigger bait to make him disperse his forces. We launched a simultaneous attack on three villages to the east of the Antu County town–Nanerdaogou, Beierdaogou and Xinchengtun .

This time the enemy took the bait. The units of the Kwantung Army, which had been staying put on the southern border of Antu and Helong Counties, rushed to the Antu County town, fearing its immediate fall. The Korean-Manchurian border guards joined them.

Our efforts to lure the enemy forces into the heart of Antu County were aimed at scattering them and spreading the flames of the armed struggle into the homeland, taking advantage of the movement of the Japanese forces encamped along the Tuman River.

At that time Kim Il's 8th Regiment was on a mission to advance into the homeland. I ordered the 8th Regiment to move slowly to the border area, in dispersed formation, and moved the 7th Regiment and the Guard Company to the northern part of Antu County. From that time on, we struck at the enemy every day.

Kim Il, in command of a small unit, infiltrated the homeland. He moved to Samjang Sub-county, Musan County, in mid-May, launched a surprise attack on the enemy's border guards and did political work among the local people for two days.

The daring combat action of the small unit of the KPRA and its audacious political work among the people in the homeland at a time when Governor-General Minami was ordering the border guards to prevent the intrusion of even a single guerrilla into Korea were notable successes in the anti-Japanese revolutionary struggle in the first half of the 1940s.

In support of the successful advance into the homeland, we intensified strikes on the Tuman River and in central and northern Antu County, inflicting heavy losses on the enemy.

Thus, the new "punitive" operations of the "Nozoe Command" suffered heavily at the outset. His "Punitive Command" had its subordinates–the "area punitive force" and "small-area punitive force"–on the carpet almost every day, and the subordinates were swift to clamour that the blame lay with their neighbouring units. Nozoe was busy constantly issuing new guidelines for the "punitive" operations.

When we were making preparations for new operations, Han In Hwa

came to us from southern Manchuria, bringing with him 50 or 60 men, the survivors of the 1st Route Army. He said they had been sent by Wei Zheng-min and wanted to join our unit. He was a staff officer of the 1st Route Army and political commissar of the Guard Brigade.

We decided to boost their morale through joint operations with them.

In June the same year we attacked Dongjingping and Shangdadong, only to find that Dongjingping was in a defenceless state. Its defence had been neglected because it had been raided only ten days before, and the enemy thought that we would not attack it again so soon. In the subsequent days, we launched simultaneous attacks on a few other villages.

On the day following the raid on the lumber mill at Gudonghe, we had a sumptuous feast with the comrades from southern Manchuria in celebration of the *Tano* festival, using food supplies we had captured from the enemy in the battle.

When he had drunk a few cups of liquor, Han In Hwa squeezed my hand, saying, "Commander Kim, I now understand why Wei Zheng-min sent me to you. The situation in Jiandao is much more threatening than in southern Manchuria, and the enemy's 'punitive' forces seem to be moving as if on your orders, not on the orders of Nozoe or Umezu."

He had got so strong an impression from our operations that he exclaimed that the 2nd Directional Army was Number One, and that Commander Kim's army was invincible! He said he was now confident about the future of the struggle, and would go to visit Chen Han-zhang in Emu or in Dunhua and Zhou Bao-zhong in Ningan and then fight in high spirits.

The daring actions of the main force of the KPRA threw the Japanese completely off their balance.

While the enemy was on full alert throughout Jiandao to turn the tide of the unsuccessful "special clean-up campaign" in his favour, an unexpected incident took place in our ranks. Lu Bo-qi, political chief of the directional army, who had been receiving medical treatment in a secret camp near Damalugou, was captured by the enemy and forced to spill all the secrets of our unit.

We decided to cope with the difficulty caused by his capture and

surrender by ceaselessly attacking and by adopting a variety of tactical changes.

In the first place, I made up my mind to divide my unit into a number of small units, and to regroup the directional army into many small units to fight an audacious and elusive war of attrition. The small units would be mobile in action, capable of slipping through the enemy's tight network of outposts with ease and throwing him again into confusion.

The small units would be able to hide quickly even after they had been discovered by the enemy.

Therefore, we regrouped the directional army into many small units without delay, and started a war of attrition.

As you can see, we did not flinch from the Japanese offensive, but faced up to it and countered it.

What would have become of us if we had cowered in the face of the enemy's massive offensive and avoided the enemy, looking for safe places? Needless to say, we would have suffered a heavy loss. We were able to triumph because we maintained the initiative and struck the enemy time and time again, throwing him into confusion.

Even the enemy admitted that the KPRA had been victorious in the spring and summer campaigns in Juche 29 (1940).

"The bandits, who skillfully parried the spearhead of the spring and autumn punitive offensives, have been operating in full swing everywhere on the strength of the thriving season. Especially over the past few months, they have been audacious enough to raid villages behind the second and third lines, inflicting heavy losses upon us. This is a matter of great chagrin for us all. We have tens of thousands of troops, namely, the Japanese and Manchukuo armies, gendarmerie, police forces, railway guards, members of the Concordia Association, and so on. No matter how unfavourable the season and terrain conditions may be, it cannot be denied that we all, particularly I, the commander of the punitive forces, should be held responsible for permitting the bandits to demonstrate such power. A detailed analysis of the recent situation, however, impels me to feel acute pain and regret at the realization that many glaring weaknesses and defects in the harmony and unity of the punitive forces in particular, and the other related

organizations, and in their activities have impeded the clean-up campaigns and resulted in allowing the bandits to run rampant." (Documents concerning the Clean-up Campaigns, Nozoe Punitive Command, Showa 15 (1940).)

We gained a lot of experience in the small-unit actions during the spring and summer operations in 1940. Previously, we had engaged mainly in large-unit operations, although the situation occasionally required small-unit actions.

During the summer of 1940, however, we frequently employed versatile tactics of continuous strikes, repeated strikes and simultaneous strikes by small units. In the course of this, we acquired new and valuable experience, learning that the more the enemy reinforces his strength and the tighter the network of encirclement, the smaller should be the combat units employed in guerrilla warfare. This helped greatly towards establishing the strategic task for the next stage and evolving the fighting methods to implement the task.

If I had not gained this experience, I would have been unable to propose the switch from large-unit operations to small-unit actions at the conference held at Xiaohaerbaling in August that year. Because we were experienced in this tactic and convinced of its advantage, we adopted small-unit actions as the major form of fighting in the first half of the 1940s, and in consequance, were able to maintain the initiative.

Some people think that we engaged in only large-unit operations in the years before that conference, and only small-unit actions after the meeting. But that is not true.

Guerrilla warfare is characterized by adapting the tactics to the prevailing military and political situations and other circumstances. Small-unit actions had been considered important and employed, when necessary, during the latter half of the 1930s, when large-unit operations were the main form of fighting.

The dispersed small-unit action that was prevalent in the experimental stage in the first half of 1940 was adopted by all the guerrilla units after the conference at Xiaohaerbaling.

What I have said above is the story of the events that took place after the large-unit circling operations. Today I have taken time to explain this because historians have said they felt there were many blanks in the study of this period.

If we view the conference at Xiaohaerbaling as a landmark, our activities in the spring and summer of 1940 may be regarded as preparations for the conference.

It was when the war that had broken out in Europe was spreading quickly that we came to think of changing our strategy in keeping with the trend of the developments.

The Japanese imperialists were making frantic efforts to spread the flames of war to Southeast Asia in order to realize their ambition of creating the "Greater East Asia Coprosperity Sphere", even though they were still engaged in aggression on the mainland of China. They were making every effort for the "security of the home front".

Their tenacious, large-scale "punitive" offensive I mentioned above, and their unprecedentedly brutal fascist oppression and plunder of our people were products of the furtherance of their aggressive policy.

We considered, however, that with the expansion of their aggressive war the Japanese imperialists would be further isolated at home and abroad and find themselves in a deeper political, economic and military predicament.

The general situation indicated that the downfall of Japanese imperialism was certain and imminent, and that the day of our national liberation, the historic cause of our people, was near at hand.

That was why I summed up the successes and experiences in the ten years of the anti-Japanese armed struggle, and evolved a new line of preserving and expanding our forces in order to deal with the great occasion of national liberation on our own initiative, in keeping with the rapidly-changing situation.

Making full preparations for the momentous occasion of national liberation was the logical requirement for the development of our revolution at that time.

The transition to a new strategic stage did not permit us to see only the change in the objective situation one-sidedly and follow it in a passive way, but required us to take the lead in the struggle at all times on the basis of the calculation of the motive force capable of speeding up the ultimate victory, as well as the analysis of the past course of the struggle.

I first went over the strategic tasks of the preceding stage to see whether they had been carried out.

I examined the strategic tasks that had been defined at the Nanhutou conference, and found none of them outstanding. I came to the conclusion that these tasks–the laying of the organizational and ideological foundations for Party building, the formation and expansion of the anti-Japanese national united front, the advance to the border area, and the extension of the armed struggle into the homeland–had all been carried out.

Another important matter that must not be overlooked in defining the strategic stage of armed struggle is the change in the balance of forces between friend and foe.

In terms of numerical strength, the enemy was far superior to us. In those days, they said that we were a "drop in the ocean". In these circumstances common sense undermined the validity of the traditional military term "estimate of the balance of forces".

Our estimate of the balance of forces was not arithmetical. I calculated that one of my men was a match for a hundred or even a thousand foes.

After the Nanhutou conference, the KPRA quickly developed politically, ideologically and militarily. This army, though smaller than the enemy in number, had always taken the initiative, and always triumphed over the enemy that was scores of times or even a hundred times superior in terms of numerical strength. In the course of this, it had grown up into a strong army that had acquired the tactical and strategic skills capable of coping with whatever situation cropped up.

The KPRA was a special, new-type revolutionary army that carried out both military and political missions at the same time.

In retrospect, the armed struggle against the Japanese imperialists, the

established leadership position of the KPRA in the overall Korean revolution and its increasing role as the hard-core force patently proved that we were absolutely correct in adhering to the principle of concentrating on the building of the revolutionary armed force by giving it priority over all other matters.

In general, in the struggle of the communists to seize power, the principle was to organize the party as the political leadership first and then build the revolutionary armed force.

However, in view of the decisive role of the revolutionary armed force and violence in the revolutionary struggle, in the national liberation struggle in the colonies in particular, and in consideration of the specific situation in our country, I chose the method of giving priority to building the armed force, and then building the party.

We organized the Anti-Japanese People's Guerrilla Army, the first revolutionary armed force, in April 1932 and developed it into the Korean People's Revolutionary Army. By relying on this army we not only ignited the armed struggle against the Japanese imperialists and led the overall national liberation struggle to a fresh upsurge, but also successfully pushed forward the laying of the organizational and ideological foundations for party building, the formation of the Association for the Restoration of the Fatherland (ARF), the development of the united-front movement and the preparations for all-out national resistance under the leadership of the KPRA and its armed support.

We can say that the KPRA, which played the role of the backbone and hard core during the revolutionary struggle against the Japanese imperialist aggressors, gave the struggle political leadership and provided an armed guarantee for the national interests, was, in fact, our Party and our government as well as our armed force.

All this meant that our own hard-core force capable of carrying out the tasks of the new strategic stage had been prepared.

Many successes had been achieved in awakening the popular masses to ideological awareness and organizing them to get them prepared politically

and ideologically. In those days the membership of the ARF amounted to 200,000.

In the homeland there were many paramilitary organizations, such as workers' shock brigades and production guerrillas. These organizations served as parent bodies for the formation of armed units for all-out national resistance.

The political climate among the unorganized masses also was very good.

Around that time Kim Il's small unit was on a march towards the Tuman River, on their way back from the homeland after giving the enemy hard blows.

Suddenly, they spied a lame peasant hobbling after them. The man warned the guerrillas not to cross the river at the point to which they were heading. He said that the area was crawling with the enemy.

Kim Il was not sure whether he should believe this man or not, because he was a stranger.

Seeing that the guerrillas were hesitating, the peasant produced a newspaper report of the battle in the Musan area in May 1939. The man was so proud of his countrymen's feat that he had been carrying the clipping with him ever since. Kim Il decided to trust him.

The peasant said he would guide them, adding that although there were guards on the route, these people would help the revolutionary army.

The small unit crossed the river in safety that night, with the help of local villagers who had been forced to stand guard, who guided the guerrillas to a safe crossing.

The growing politico-ideological awareness of the people and their invariable support for the KPRA gave a strong impetus to the development of the armed struggle against the Japanese.

Changes in the enemy's strategic aims are another question that has to be taken into consideration in defining the strategic stage of armed struggle.

In the summer of 1940, we captured a Japanese engineer officer at a road construction site in Huanggouling. Through interrogation we got to know that the enemy was undertaking a large project to form a road network in the wide

area of Jiandao and southern Manchuria. The prisoner said that roads were under construction not only in Helong, Yanji, Dunhua, Huadian and Fusong, centring on Antu County, but also in the homeland and in the steep, inaccessible valleys in the area northeast of Mt. Paektu.

The progress of military road construction was reported every day to Kwantung Army headquarters through the "Nozoe Punitive Command". The prisoner said that Commander Nozoe would soon inspect the roads, which were being built to increase the mobility of the "punitive" forces in the campaign against the KPRA. These roads would be used by the enemy to mass forces in the theatre of our operations from various parts of Korea and Northeast China.

In addition, many aeroplane landing-strips had been constructed around us. The prisoner said that more landing-strips would be constructed in the three provinces in the southeast on Nozoe's top-secret orders. He revealed the locations of the landing-strips that he knew, saying that the aircraft would be attached to the "area punitive forces" and even "small-area punitive forces".

If the prisoner's statement was true, we would be as good as surrounded by the enemy's landing-strips.

About that time, the "Nozoe Punitive Command" was going to be moved from Jilin to Yanji, and the headquarters of the "east-area punitive force" from Yanji to Tumen.

Our Headquarters continually received information from reconnaissance parties and other sources that enemy reinforcements were ceaselessly moving towards the theatre of our activities. It seemed that the enemy was seeking a final showdown before long at any cost.

It seemed impossible to deal with the rapid change in the enemy's situation using the previous strategic measures. A drastic change in our strategy was imperative.

For this reason, I put forward the strategic task of preserving and increasing our revolutionary force through actions on our own initiative while avoiding losses from inadvertent combat, regarding this task as most important for the revolution.

The strategic policy of taking the initiative to greet the momentous occasion of national liberation was adopted at the conference held in Xiaohaerbaling in August 1940.

When we reached the border between Antu and Dunhua Counties, Ri Ryong Un, the commander of the 15th Regiment, and Company Commander Im Chol came to see us with several bodyguards.

I explained to Ju Jae Il the purpose of calling the conference of military and political cadres in Xiaohaerbaling, and told him to summon company commanders, company political instructors and higher officers to the meeting. They were to arrive by August 9, or the 7th of the seventh month by the lunar calendar. An Kil and Choe Hyon, who were operating around Wangqing and Dongning, were to be informed of the results of the conference later, and the 13th and 14th Regiments were to send only their company delegates who were fighting not far from us. Since Ri Ryong Un and Im Chol were already with us, there was no need to notify the 15th Regiment.

The conference lasted two days, from the tenth to the eleventh of August.

The major issue at the conference was whether to define the next strategic stage as the period of a great revolutionary event, in other words, whether we could liberate the country in the next stage.

I said, in short, that we could. I explained that the Japanese army was crumbling, though it still was strong, that the outbreak of mutiny in the air corps of the Kwantung Army, its crack unit, foreboded its imminent collapse, that the enemy was hard pressed to stop his men deserting and surrendering time and again on the battlefield in China, that there was no need for further explanation, and that the day of Japan's defeat was not far off.

Some time earlier, Japan had issued what it called the "special volunteers" decree to force Korean youths to serve as its cannon-fodder. This decree was being enforced in Taiwan and Manchuria as well.

For Japan to have to resort to procuring cannon-fodder even from among the young people of her colonies who hated her, her shortage of military manpower must have been serious indeed.

During the period from the September 18 incident[1] to the July 7 incident[2], the Japanese army lost nearly 200,000 troops in Manchuria alone. In the Sino-Japanese War, Japan was said to have suffered even greater manpower loss in a single year.

Japan's strategic material reserves were nearing a critical point.

In the days immediately before the conference at Xiaohaerbaling, the Japanese used ammunition that had been produced later than 1939, whereas at the time of the Battle of Jiansanfeng they had used ammunition produced in the 1920s. This meant that their ammunition reserves were exhausted.

Meanwhile, Japan's political situation was very complex. The Cabinet changed once almost every three days, and polemics raged ceaselessly. The military also was full of contradictions. Because the senior officers were divided into different factions and wrangled with each other, they could not ensure the unity of operations and cooperation. On top of that, the contradictions between capital and labour, between the military and civilian sectors of the population, and between suzerain and colonies were reaching the point of explosion. Secret agents had to be planted even in the villages of Japan itself to gag her own people.

At the conference, therefore, I summed up Japan's state policy as an overt indication of her attempt to occupy Southeast Asia, taking advantage of the outbreak of war in Europe, and laid special emphasis on my consideration of the prospect that if Japan advanced into Southeast Asia, it would amount to digging her own grave.

To proceed, the conference discussed the strategic task that should be carried out pending the great event of national liberation.

At the time, we defined a new strategic task of preserving and accumulating the force of the KPRA, the backbone of the Korean revolution, and training its officers and men to be able political and military cadres in preparation for greeting the great event of national liberation on our own initiative.

The great event meant a final decision into which the opposing sides would throw all their political and military capabilities. To win the decisive

battle, each of our men should be prepared to perform the duties of ranks several grades higher than his present one. After the country was liberated, these men were to play the pivotal role in the building of a new Korea.

The decisive battle and the building of a new country were a strategic challenge that would mean the making of a new history of our country and bringing about a dramatic change in the fate of our people. It was a task that could not be carried out by any foreigners. The KPRA and the Korean people had to carry it out themselves.

We had to rely on the force we ourselves had prepared through many years of revolutionary struggle against the Japanese. It would be welcome if other people helped us in the decisive battle, but we must fight in our own right. So I asked my men if they could raise their qualifications by a few grades, and they answered yes with confidence. I again asked if they could arm all the people and mobilize them in resistance, and again they answered in the affirmative.

In order to ensure the success of the strategic task, we put forward a new fighting policy on switching over from large-unit operations to small-unit actions.

Certainly, there was some argument about this idea. Some comrades were apprehensive of the possibility of small units being defeated piecemeal in an encounter with large enemy forces, which would attack us from all quarters.

"The heyday of large units is gone," I said to these comrades. "This is no time for noisily moving about in large units. If we continued with large-unit operations when the enemy is trying to surround us with large forces and destroy us at one stroke, it would mean falling into the enemy's trap and ending in self-destruction. Figuratively, it would amount to covering our heads with pumpkins and crawling into a pigsty. If we move and fight in small units and conduct political work among the masses, it will be easy to obtain food supplies and manoeuvre with freedom. How many comrades have been killed by the enemy on missions to get food! Even the food supplies that had cost their lives soon ran out because they had to be shared out among large units. Small-unit actions will scatter the enemy forces to the

maximum. This was proved in the whole course of the small-unit actions carried out during this spring and summer. Our intention should be to minimize the enemy's targets."

We re-emphasized the need to develop elusive small-unit military actions in the wide areas of Korea and Manchuria, conduct intensive political work among the masses, quickly organize the work of improving the military and political qualifications of every soldier and officer, and strengthen solidarity with the anti-imperialist forces throughout the world, in order to carry out the new strategic task. We reached agreement on specific measures, and then closed the meeting.

The Xiaohaerbaling conference was a historic meeting that decided to change our strategic line at a new turning point of our revolution, like the Mingyuegou conference in December 1931 and the Nanhutou conference in February 1936 that also set forth important strategic lines for the armed struggle against the Japanese.

If we had continued with large-unit operations in pursuit of only immediate successes, unable to see the trend of developments at the opportune moments, it would have been impossible to preserve our force and we would have been wiped out, to be remembered by history as mere martyrs.

Xiaohaerbaling is the tail of the Haerba mountain range that stretches along the border between Dunhua and Antu Counties. The meeting was held on the northern slope of the range. There was a grassy area in front of the site of the conference.

Mention of the conference reminds me of that grassy area. No one came to cut the grass, probably because the place was far from any village. Seeing the grass, I thought that Kim Chaek, Ho Hyong Sik and Pak Kil Song, who were said to be riding about on horseback in northern Manchuria, would like to have their horses graze there. I met those comrades in the Soviet Far East.

## 2. Looking Forward to a Bright Future

I remember that in the spring of 1940 the main force of the KPRA was engaged in intensive military operations and political activity around Antu and Helong, in the area northeast of Mt. Paektu.

To tell the truth, we underwent a severe trial that spring. As we were set on taking the initiative with small forces, we naturally had to face many hardships.

The most difficult challenge was the enemy's successive waves of "punitive" attacks on the Headquarters of the KPRA. The hundreds and even thousands of enemy troops that fell upon us with raucous battle cries from all sides drove me almost out of my wits.

Nozoe seemed to be determined to fight to the death at that time. He was furious with us, as well he might be, because he had bragged that he would wipe out "banditry" by riding his war-horse as far as Mt. Paektu itself, only to encounter humiliation, being hit hard throughout the winter by the KPRA in large-unit circling operations. Not only the Kwantung Army Commander but also the top hierarchy of the Japanese military took him to task.

Depressed by the loss of the initiative in battle, and angry with himself to the point of frenzy, Nozoe brought in reinforcements from the Fengtian and Tonghua areas, and even the Soviet-Manchurian border guards, and hurled them into "punitive" actions.

To make matters worse, there were traitors like Rim Su San, who surrendered to the enemy and led them to track down the Headquarters of the KPRA.

On top of this, the enemy's secret agents, lurking in mountain huts that had been put up by hunters, mushroom raisers and illicit opium growers, were watching the movements of the guerrillas. Groups of traitors, in the

name of what they called “working parties”, appeared in places where we were active and openly shouted that the situation was in favour of the Empire of Japan and that we should surrender, instead of spilling blood in vain for a revolution that had no future.

But the shortage of food was the hardest nut to crack.

The enemy did everything conceivable to prevent even a handful of grain leaking into our hands. Whenever we stored food reserves underground in the mountains, they quickly sniffed them out and destroyed them.

The enemy also strictly controlled the food supplies to the inhabitants in internment villages. When the peasants went out to their fields, the sentries at the gates of these villages ransacked even their lunch pails. In many internment villages, the food rations, clothing and ammunition for the army and policemen stationed there were kept in secret stores outside the walled villages, and the locations of these stores were known only to the men who dealt with them. The store-keepers were the only ones who had keys to the stores and, only when necessary, opened the stores in secret and transported the supplies little by little to the villages. The enemy took such countermeasures because we had frequently attacked fortified towns and villages, and carried away all the supplies that we could get hold of.

The same situation prevailed in mining and lumbering areas. They kept food rations only for a couple of days, or for three or four days at the most, in those places.

When we were in the vicinity of Chechangzi, we ran out of food and salt. The $7^{th}$ and $8^{th}$ Regiments roamed around in the Antu area looking for food, but in vain. So the whole unit had to go hungry.

We were so hard up that we had to eat frog meat on May Day that year. In some countries, fashionable restaurants serve frog meat as a choice dish, but in our country no restaurant cooks frog meat. Occasionally, children can be seen catching frogs on the edges of rice fields or in brooks and broiling them skewered on sticks. But they do this not for the taste of the meat but mostly as a pastime.

Although guerrilla life was arduous, we had never fasted on May Day

before. On May Day in 1939, which we celebrated on the Xiaodeshui plateau, we were even able to provide the men with bottles of liquor.

On May Day in 1940, however, liquor was out of the question. We had nothing at all to eat. So we caught frogs in brooks to allay our hunger. That was how we spent the festival, so there is no need to talk about how we got along on ordinary days.

We suffered severely from hunger in the vicinity of Chechangzi, and also on the outskirts of Yangcaogou.

The whole unit had to survive on boiled grass near Yangcaogou; I'll never forget the name of that place.

One day I looked around the mess for the machine-gun platoon, and admonished them: "The thaw set in a long time ago," I said. "You could have picked wild vegetables and at least made soup with them, which would have been tasty and made up for the shortage of food." Kang Wi Ryong, the platoon leader, answered that he was short of men to stand guard, so he had not sent any men to pick edible herbs.

His answer annoyed me. Things like that could be picked on the way to and from the guard posts. If he had organized his work properly, they could have obtained stuff for soup in no time at all.

I rebuked him, saying that a unit leader must know that he was responsible for his men's lives. I told him that if he was short of men, he should take even my orderlies with him to gather wild vegetables.

The next day, the platoon leader took Jon Mun Sop and Ri Ul Sol, two of my orderlies, and Han Chang Bong to gather wild vegetables. The four men came back in the evening with a basket which was far from full of edible herbs. I asked why they had picked so few, and they said they had spent a long time, wrestling! I asked why they had wasted time wrestling instead of picking vegetables. They answered that the rustle of the spring breeze, the fragrance of the flowers and the sight of a soft lawn had awakened in them the memory of their home villages and their childhood, when they had frolicked on spring hillsides, so they spent the whole morning wrestling, in spite of themselves.

Jon Mun Sop and Han Chang Bong were nearly of the same age and same strength. So it took a long time to decide the winner of the contest. Kang Wi Ryong, a man of unusually large build, acted as referee and encouraged the wrestlers, shouting, “Well done! Well done! Go on! Again!” clapping his hands at the end of each round. Encouraged by the platoon leader, the two men grew enthusiastic and continued wrestling.

I was dumbfounded at their account of the incident. For the four men to return, having not even filled a basket and having wasted their precious time wrestling–when we were suffering a food shortage at that and when I had sent even my orderlies with them to pick wild vegetables!

I criticized them severely and gave them the penalty of a warning.

I could have meted out a heavier punishment in view of the graveness of their mistake. None of my men had ever slighted his commander’s orders as they had done. The irony of the incident was that it involved four men of whom each had had a strong sense of responsibility and had been more faithful to his duties than anybody else. They were in the habit of carrying out any assignment, light or heavy, with credit. To be honest, they were worthy of being held up as model guerrillas in our unit.

When I lay down in my bed that night, the basket with its light load swam before my eyes. Although I had given them the penalty of a warning at the sight of the basket, I pictured them in my mind, enjoying wrestling, forgetting everything, and I found myself beaming with delight at the thought of their optimistic way of life that found expression in the wrestling bout, unconcerned with the awful situation at that time.

A man without mental composure or without an optimistic view of life cannot think of wrestling in that threatening situation. Only men of strong faith and strong will like the men of our guerrilla army can live with optimism, dreaming of the future, singing songs and wrestling even when they are surrounded by the enemy.

The KPRA was a body of optimistic people, the like of which has never been known in all history, Eastern or Western. Although there have been many renowned armies and guerrillas in the world, probably none has been

as vivacious and full of revolutionary optimism and ardour for a great future as the KPRA was. The KPRA was a collective of optimistic people who overcame difficulties with laughter, changed misfortunes into blessings, and firmly believed that there would be a way out even if the whole world crumbled.

Jon Mun Sop, though diffident, was very optimistic. Taking leave of his parents to join the revolutionary army, he had said, “Please wait for me. When the proletarian revolution has triumphed and the country has become independent, I will return in a car.” To return to the embrace of his parents in a car after destroying Japanese imperialism! How extraordinary and optimistic he was as he voiced his determination.

An Kil was also optimistic. I especially loved him because he was not only loyal to the revolution, but extremely optimistic, which I set great store by. He was a cheerful revolutionary who knew no pessimism.

Most of the anti-Japanese guerrillas were optimistic. In effect, all the men and women who took up arms to fight battles to the death against the Japanese imperialists lived with revolutionary optimism, knowing no pessimism.

Although I considered the mistake committed by the four men serious, I refrained from meting out heavier punishment than a warning because I valued their innocent cheerfulness and the courage that lay behind their behaviour.

This minor incident convinced me that even if we had to make arduous marches ten times or even a hundred times, those men would follow me to the end.

In my experience, optimistic people fighting for the revolution with unshakable faith will never be swayed, no matter what wind blows. Even if they were to mount the gallows tomorrow, they would stay firm. By contrast, those who drift into the revolution with the wind of the general trend, without their own faith, just to have a try at it, seeing that everyone else does, will run away to a more comfortable place sooner or later.

You comrades must have read about the way we caught crayfish during a

march. That is a vivid example that shows how important optimism is in the lives and struggles of revolutionaries. That was an event that took place during the expedition to Dunhua, the first stage of the large-unit circling operations in the autumn of 1939.

In those days, too, we went through severe hardships because of a shortage of food. To procure food supplies, it was necessary to throw off the pursuing enemy. But the enemy's "punitive" force was close on our tail, so it was impossible to obtain food. Not even a rabbit was to be found on our way, for some reason, and as we were marching through a vast expanse of wilderness, there were no local people we could turn to for rations.

The men were so exhausted that they found it difficult to step over fallen trees, and had to go around them. When a break was ordered once in a long while, they sank to the ground or lay down anywhere they happened to be to allay their fatigue. Some of them were still fast asleep even when orders were given to resume the march. Toudaobaihe, Erdaobaihe, Sandaobaihe and Sidaobaihe on the upper reaches of the Songhua River were full of marshes and primeval forests, so that even hunters were reluctant to go there. So the march was sluggish.

"Comrades, shape up!" I used to shout, encouraging and helping the fallen comrades to rise. "We must keep our chins up in a situation like this. We'll take a rest and have plenty to eat when we reach Liangjiangkou."

I myself was hungry and tired, but, as their commander, I knew I should not reveal any sign of hunger or fatigue. One day, at noon, I ordered a break on the flat side of a gently-sloping ridge and sent scouts to a nearby valley to reconnoitre the place. They came back with a report that there was a small stream there and no sign of danger. I took a few of my men with me to the brook, rolled up my trousers to the knees and stepped into the water. I began to grope about in the stream, lifting stones noiselessly. Before long, I had caught a big crayfish. When I threw it onto the bank of the stream, the others cheered and dashed into the water to try to catch some more.

The men vied with one another to jump into the water. They caught crayfish in high spirits, as if forgetting their days of starvation. When their

feet became too cold, they came out and stood for a while, and then jumped back into the water. All the men spent a pleasant time catching crayfish. Even the men who had been plodding on the march with great difficulty did the same.

We went back to the spot on the ridge and built a fire and broiled the catch. Eating the reddish, fragrant broiled fish, the men joked and laughed. A short while catching crayfish had made a complete change in the atmosphere of the unit.

Of course, a few crayfish could not fill the men's stomachs. But the joy of fishing had dispelled all feelings of hunger and fatigue. After that, the speed of the march doubled.

Looking at their merry countenances that day, I wondered, how the men could become cheerful so suddenly, as only a short while before they had been unable to stride over fallen trees, and had sunk to the ground as soon as a break was ordered.

I believed that the catching of crayfish had enlivened the men to be optimistic. While concentrating on catching crayfish, they forgot their tiredness, became refreshed, and gained new strength and grew cheerful as if they had not gone hungry for many days.

The unit acquired a cheerful atmosphere because the sport of fishing aroused romantic emotions in the men.

As I said previously, we arranged a joint entertainment for our soldiers and the local people. At Yushidong on May Day in 1939 we held a spectacular football match. As they had not played football for many years, the men were so inept that the spectators split their sides laughing.

The players made many slips, but the spectators did not blame them at all. Such mistakes provoked louder laughter among the people.

It sounds easy, but it was not a simple matter to celebrate the *Tano* festival with a football game in the heart of Helong, when the enemy was concentrating all his forces on the main force of the KPRA to destroy it after the battle in the Musan area.

It was a venture that was possible only for the men and officers of the

KPRA, who used diverse tactics and had bold hearts bubbling over with revolutionary optimism.

Revolutionaries are optimistic about the future. The revolution itself originates from a dream of the future or from the craving for a new life. Revolutionaries have a noble ideal for the future, and devote all their minds and bodies to the struggle to realize this ideal. If they had no optimistic view of the future nor a firm faith in the victory of the revolution, they would not embark on the road of revolutionary struggle; and even though they threw themselves into the revolution, they would be unable to endure the severe trials and hardships that stand in their way.

A revolutionary's view of life, his personality, and his creed and way of life differ from those of others, not only in his unshakable faith or his unbreakable will, but more importantly in the greatness of his ideal and ambition, and in his unwavering optimistic view of the future when his ideal and ambition will be realized. It may be said that revolutionary belief, will and optimism constitute the three special qualities of a revolutionary, or the three major elements of his ideological and moral qualities.

Some foreign journalists once asked me what the secret was of maintaining my health at 80 years of age just as if I were in my fifties.

I answered that the secret was my optimistic attitude to life. Hearing my answer, they all applauded. A man's physiological age is affected by the degree of his optimistic attitude to life. Likewise, the success or vitality of a revolution in a country depends on the revolutionary optimism of its people. This is my firmly held view.

An optimistic man can feel the worth of life even if he is to live only a single day. An army that lives in low spirits can neither unite nor fight well.

Revolutionary faith and will can endure until the ultimate victory of the revolution when these are based on an optimistic view of the future.

What is meant by becoming a revolutionary? It means taking the road of struggle, ready to face prison, the gallows and death. It means, in other words, committing oneself to the cause of national liberation, class emancipation and human freedom, with a firm and optimistic view of the future, with a resolve

and determination to dedicate oneself single-heartedly to the victory of the revolution. We talk much about living in a revolutionary way, implying living like revolutionaries. Revolutionaries beat an untrodden path without hesitation for a bright future. On this path, they endure whatever trials crop up with a belief in eventual happiness, and throw themselves into fire and water, with a noble awareness that it is a matter of honour whether they live or die on the road of struggle for the party and the leader, for their country and fellows.

This is the very reason why the lives of revolutionaries are valuable and worthwhile.

The deserters from our ranks were, without exception, pessimists who lost confidence in the future. They were weak-kneed people who had drifted into the revolutionary ranks with the wind of a revolutionary upsurge and ran away to save their own skins, afraid of manifold hardships and unfavourable situations, without caring a straw about the revolution.

The 1940s was a period when revolutionary romanticism and optimism were more valuable than anything else. These were the touchstones that tested the real value of each of my men and his loyalty to the revolution. Those who believed that we would emerge victorious followed me on the road of revolution to the end, and those who did not believe, gave up the revolution and left our ranks.

Revolutionary optimism does not come about of its own accord. It is acquired only through ceaseless education and continuous ideological training. Frankly speaking, it is not easy to take an optimistic view of the future when the enemy is strong and there is no knowing exactly when the revolution will triumph. That is why we need unremitting efforts for ideological education and ideological training. The KPRA was a strong army that was not swayed by any storm because we put great efforts into ideological education from the outset.

We consistently educated the guerrillas in unfailing loyalty to the revolution, and inspired them with an unbreakable fighting spirit, revolutionary optimism, the justice of our cause and unshakable confidence in the victory of the revolution.

I made use of every odd moment to inspire my men with optimism. I used to say, “When the country is independent, let us go to Pyongyang and eat mullet soup and cold noodles and then climb Moran Hill to view the Taedong River!” Then, the men would exclaim, “Oh, let us hasten the coming of that day!” giving clenched-fist salutes. They then used to fight with redoubled courage.

On May Day in 1940, too, when we ate frog meat in celebration of the festival, I encouraged them to have revolutionary optimism and a firm conviction of victory.

On the evening of that day, we sat up around the campfire deep into the night. We had a pleasant time, talking about the revolution, about the motherland, about our parents, brothers and sisters at home, and about the coming day of victory.

“Comrades,” I said to the men, “although we celebrated May Day by eating frog meat today, we will defeat Japanese imperialism and celebrate the liberation of our homeland in Pyongyang by feasting on the soup of mullet caught in the Taedong River. The enemy is now making frantic efforts to destroy us, but we will never be brought to our knees. Let us all fight more determinedly to destroy the Japanese imperialist aggressors and liberate our motherland, with a firm confidence in the future and with the lofty pride of the Korean nation and Korean communists.”

The men’s faces, reflected in the light of the campfire, looked all cheerful and lively. They were full of confidence and determined to endure whatever hardships faced them bravely and optimistically, and win back their lost country, at any cost.

If I had kept my eyes on a distant mountain with folded arms in the face of difficulties, or if I had told the men to break up and go to bed in the tents now that they had eased their hunger with frog meat, it would have been impossible to create such a cheerful and lively atmosphere in the unit. Many of them would have been unable to sleep, worrying about what was in store for them to eat the following day, although they had managed to eat frog meat that day.

When they were told to catch frogs to prepare festival food, all the

comrades turned out, raising cheers and rolling up their sleeves. When I was talking about the future of the revolution deep into the night, they sat by my side, and drank in my words. They did so because they had sensed in the looks of their commander unshakable confidence in the victory of the revolution and solid determination that no peril could shake.

I was convinced that, although the enemy was sticking to us like a tick so as not to allow us to eat, rest and sleep, the KPRA would never yield to them, nor would it be defeated by them.

As you see, a commander's mental state is important. If the commander is courageous, his men will be courageous; if the commander's belief is unshakable, so will be his men's. Just as soldiers' optimism is affected by their commander's faith, so the people's optimism depends on their leader's faith and determination. This is the reason why the masses look up at the faces of their leaders in times of difficulty.

When I said we would emerge victorious, the guerrillas believed that they would triumph; when I smiled, they saw a bright future for the revolution in the smile. When I hummed a little while angling, they judged that the next operation would result in victory.

Not only I, but also all the commanding officers, inspired the men with an optimistic spirit. Choe Kyong Hwa and Kang Ton talked a lot even on the march to boost the men's morale.

Artistic and literary activities served as major means of inspiring faith and optimism in the minds of the men. There is no talking about the lives of the guerrillas without revolutionary entertainment; and it was inconceivable to talk about the victorious struggle of the KPRA apart from revolutionary songs and dances.

Comrade Kim Jong Il was right when he said that the Korean revolution had begun with songs, advanced to the strains of singing and emerged victorious with songs. Probably no revolution in the world was so closely linked to songs or woven with songs as the Korean revolution was.

The revolution itself was a heroic symphony as well as a source of songs. There can be no revolution that is separated from songs. Can you imagine the

development of the international working-class movement, separately from the *Internationale*?

It was our songs that won over the people on our expedition to northern Manchuria, the people who had been giving us a wide berth; it was the *Song of Su Wu*, which the Chinese were fond of, that attracted to us the people who were avoiding us.

Songs have had a great effect on my own life. It may be said that my life began with the *Lullaby*[3] and that my revolutionary struggle started with the *Song of the Amnok River*[4]. When I was crossing the Amnok River at the Phophyong ferry, I made up my mind while singing the song to win back my motherland. Whenever I sang this song in subsequent years I speeded up the struggle, recollecting the pledge I had made on the river.

In my middle-school days I myself wrote the texts of songs and composed the melodies. Thus the *Song of Korea*[5], the *Song of War against the Japanese*, and the *Song of the Ten-Point Programme of the ARF* were produced. Whenever I was in difficulty I derived strength from singing. When food supplies ran out, I used to pass the crisis by drinking only water and singing. In the course of this, I grew up and the revolution advanced.

When hungry, the melodies of songs allayed my hunger; and when exhausted, the sounds of songs braced me up.

Once on the Arduous March, some guardsmen were buried in an avalanche and could not get up. They struggled, but their limbs failed them because they had eaten nothing for days and were completely exhausted. I myself was hardly able to keep steady on my feet at that time. I approached the men lying in the snow like mummies and sang in a low voice the *Song of Red Flag*. The men came to themselves at the sounds of the song, stood up and resumed the march.

Once, the enemy blockaded the Chechangzi guerrilla base with thousands of troops, so that many people there died of hunger. It was the revolutionary song sung by the Children’s Corps that roused to a life-and-death battle the people in the guerrilla base who had been at the end of their tethers because of starvation and repeated “punitive” attacks by the enemy.

In those days, we had neither professional artist troupes nor professional creative workers and actors. Nevertheless, the anti-Japanese guerrillas wrote and composed songs–excellent revolutionary songs like the *Guerrilla March*–and produced a large number of revolutionary dramas, operas and dances.

In our days in the guerrilla zones, as in the days of the youth-and-student movement, we frequently organized artistic performances. Also, in the days of large-unit mobile operations in a wide area after the dissolution of the guerrilla zones we had cultural and emotional lives as part of our daily routine. Artistic performances were given both in mountains and in villages.

Artistic performances were given under the protection of machine-guns that had been posted in the surrounding area. In this way security was provided for the performances even when the enemy came to attack.

Performances took place on festivals, in the wake of major battles, and when many recruits had joined us. All these performances were aimed at equipping the soldiers and people with an unbreakable revolutionary spirit to destroy the enemy, unafraid of death, and at training all of them to be indomitable revolutionary fighters.

The announcement of the performance programmes was made in an optimistic way to meet the purpose.

Comrades from the 2$^{nd}$ Company of the 7$^{th}$ Regiment gave a performance in the form of army-civilian joint entertainment at Taoquanli, and this event was advertised as a "guffaw meeting". A notice was put up to the effect that a guffaw meeting would be held and that everyone would be welcome to the meeting. Large crowds gathered in the yard of a villager and in the vicinity.

How witty and humorous the "guffaw meeting" was! People smiled even at the sight of the notice.

Guerrillas gave artistic performances not only on happy occasions. Even on sad occasions, they held entertainments to change the atmosphere.

After O Jung Hup and Kang Hung Sok fell in battle, we gave two big concerts. The officers and men of my unit had never been so mournful and indignant as they were when those comrades were killed in action. On the

day of O's funeral, an evening meal of rice and salted, roasted mackerel was served in the camp, but nobody touched it. Whenever she saw mackerel after liberation, Kim Jong Suk used to tearfully recollect O Jung Hup. You can imagine how sorrowful my men were when they had lost him.

That was why we took time off during our marches for entertainment. Songs, dances and juggling somewhat dispelled the gloom that had enveloped the ranks.

A few days later, we attacked Jiaxinzi and staged a concert on a large scale in a forest near the Songhua River. Some veterans and historians said that the performance was given to welcome new recruits, but that was not the only purpose. It was necessary to create an optimistic atmosphere by shaking off the grief and bitterness over the loss of O Jung Hup.

The performance was an unusual one.

Poplars were cut down to improvise a stage, and a large tent was made by patching up several small ones. The floor of the stage was covered with blankets, for the frozen logs were slippery. The programme, with a variety of items, such as choral singing, vocal solos, dances, juggling, a harmonica ensemble, and so on, was announced in advance. The curtain was to be opened and closed at the sound of a whistle.

After the evening meal, the veterans and recruits, and the workers who had helped us carrying away the spoils gathered to see the performance.

I still remember that Kim Jong Suk sang the *Song of Women's Emancipation* and then danced. When she was dancing, somebody behind the folded curtain sang a song for the dancer.

Comical interludes were also interesting.

A lanky recruit from Diyangxi and another from Yanji who voiced narratives like a silent film interpreter moved the audience to tears.

*Conjuring Up the Spirit of Paebaengi*[6] was quite spectacular, but I don't remember who performed it.

A Chinese man danced on stilts like an acrobat playing in the interlude nowadays. That was exceptional. When necessary, he used to walk on stilts to rub out the footprints of men on the march in the snow.

The repertoire contained juggling by Jo To On and a song accompanied on a *hogung* (a Korean stringed instrument–Tr.) by a recruit, which was novel.

The last item was a sketch showing the life of the guerrillas. The script had been written by me at odd moments on the march.

The performance lasted four to five hours that night, but the audience was not bored at all. At the end of the performance, more people joined the army.

The entertainments during the years of the anti-Japanese revolution proved the great importance of art and literature in inspiring people with optimism.

Ideas, will and discipline are not all that is required for a revolution. Romantic emotions, in addition to ideology and morality, are also essential. Patriotism cannot sprout where there is no tangible love for one's homeland, parents, wife and children. It would be naive to assume that such a profound thought as communism could be accepted as an eternal truth by a person who has no attachment to his fellows and no feelings of devotion to them.

The whole course of the revolution against the Japanese proves that the guerrillas, with optimism and rich emotions, were unfailingly loyal to their leader and his ideas, and, with firm confidence in the victory of the revolution and with all devotion, performed heroic exploits to be remembered for ever by their country and people.

What did Pak Kil Song say at the last moment of his life? He said, "Motherland! I am proud of you. ... Communism means the youth of the world ..., is the cradle that raises a bright future for the country. … We know this so clearly that we face death with smiles."

What did Choe Hui Suk say when she lost her eyes, tortured by the enemy? She shouted that she could see the victory of the revolution, that she could see our people cheering on the day of liberation.

The Japanese hangmen said to Ri Kye Sun, who was bound in chains, that if she made a speech of repentance, they would not only spare her life, but let her live in clover for the rest of her days. But she told the enemy not to defile her ears, censured them for their ignorance of what the Korean communists

were like, and then shouted on the gallows that the day of national liberation was not far off.

All the fighters who laid down their lives on the road of the revolution against the Japanese were optimists, with rich emotions and unshakable confidence in the triumph of the revolution.

Revolutionaries have an optimistic view of the future. They set greater store by tomorrow than today, and give their lives when in full bloom for the good of tomorrow without hesitation. They are indomitable fighters.

I speak to you here today with special emphasis on revolutionary optimism because the situation at home and abroad now requires it more urgently than ever before.

Because of the imperialists' clamour for sanctions since the collapse of socialism in several countries, our people are undergoing serious difficulties in many ways. We are faced with grave challenges in all fields of political, military, economic and cultural life. It may be said that we are in a hair-trigger confrontation with the enemy, in a situation more strained than in a war.

These difficulties, however, cannot last a hundred or two hundred years or indefinitely. These are temporary difficulties, and are bound to be overcome.

You comrades must work hard with an optimistic view of the future and in the spirit of self-reliance and fortitude to resolve today's difficulties as soon as possible and promote the country's advance.

The core of today's optimism is a strong belief that we can emerge victorious as long as we have younger people like Comrade Kim Jong Il. We are perfectly optimistic about the future because Comrade Kim Jong Il is giving leadership to the revolution.

I would like to emphasize again: Believe in Comrade Kim Jong Il, and everything will be all right. The future of Korea and the 21st century exists in the mettle of Comrade Kim Jong Il. History will prove this without fail.

# 3. On Receiving a Message from the Comintern

The great leader devoted much effort to cooperation with international revolutionary forces during the years of the anti-Japanese revolution, while giving independent leadership to the Korean revolution.

He recollected the events in the period from the late 1930s to the early 1940s, when the Korean revolution was broadening its scope on an international scale with the deepening of relations with the Comintern and the Soviet Union, and when the joint struggle of the Korean and Chinese peoples against the Japanese was developing onto a higher stage of struggle that involved Korea, China and the Soviet Union. His recollections are as follows:

In 1939 we restored contact with the Comintern that had been interrupted for several years. It was when we had changed into new cotton-padded uniforms for large-unit circling operations.

The main force of the KPRA was then undergoing military and political training in the secret camp at Hualazi.

One day Kim Il, who had been on a small-unit operation, returned to Headquarters with three prisoners in dark *dabushanzi*. He said that he had captured the men because their appearances and behaviour were suspicious. They did not look like mountain peasants, and so he thought they might be special agents of the Japanese.

They had pistols, pans and roasted soy beans with them.

When I questioned them, and when they found out that we were the 2nd Directional Army and that I was Kim Il Sung, they said they were messengers from the Comintern. They produced a match-box, in which the match sticks were longer than those produced in Manchuria or Korea. They said that they were made in the Soviet Union. At that time, however, none of us could recognize them as being Soviet-made.

I asked for more proof of their identity.

They then produced a pocket knife. It was the one I had sent to the Comintern through Wei Zheng-min. It had been intended for use as a secret sign of identification when making contact with us. Many stormy years had passed, but I remembered that knife well. I had told Wei Zheng-min to leave it in the care of the Comintern in Moscow to be used by its messengers to us as their credentials.

The knife dispelled our suspicions about the three messengers. It was very pleasing to us that the Comintern had sent us messengers, and had not forgotten us, though we had not yet heard their mission.

Contact with the Comintern that had been severed after the Nanhutou conference was re-established in this manner. The messengers' arrival was a great encouragement to us as we were preparing for new operations, decisive battles, against an enemy force of more than 200,000 troops.

The messengers said that six men had been sent originally, but three of them, including a Korean, had fallen ill while searching for us and returned.

The Comintern, unable to pinpoint where we were, had instructed them to look for Kim Il Sung's army around Yanji. They had searched for us here and there, guessing at our whereabouts, wasting much time and suffering many hardships. Although they had a map, it was useless because we were on mobile operations at the time.

To make matters worse, the local people shunned them, and they were going to give up trying to contact us and return to the Soviet Union when a man in the village of Sandaogou hinted to them that they should search for us around Hualazi, and that was how they found us.

They said that their clothes had been burned in an accidental fire while they were sleeping in a mountain hut. Their food rations had run out and they had had to survive on roasted soy beans. If they had failed to find us at Hualazi, they would have abandoned their mission and gone back. They said that from the moment they set foot on the soil of Manchuria, they had felt as if they were on a ship in distress in a raging sea.

I provided them with new clothes and articles of daily use. Then, after a

meal, they took a good rest in comfort in the Headquarters tent.

An official record of the Japanese imperialists about the Comintern's dispatch of messengers to the great leader Comrade Kim Il Sung and the 1st Route Army of the Northeast Anti-Japanese Allied Army (NAJAA) in late Juche 28(1939) goes as follows:

"On October 11, in the 6th year of Kangde (1939), eight Russians wearing pistols and dressed like bandits, accompanied by two Korean interpreters, came and had an important interview with Kim Il Sung, who was in the forest of Zhenfeng, northwest of Sandaogou, Helong County. They stayed there approximately ten days, allowing nobody except high-ranking officers to approach them, and then left there taking with them 12 infirm persons from the group of Kim Il Sung's bandits. It is said that the Russians were messengers from the Soviet Union. ... Although nothing is known in detail, they must have been on an important mission directly from the Soviet Union." (Report from Hunchun consul Kiuchi, July 26, Showa 15 (1940).)

"Next, about the line of party leadership. In December last year (1939), four messengers came to the 1st Route Army directly from the Soviet Union, but nothing is known about the content of the message or its purpose. Only the fact is clearly stated in Wei Zheng-min's letter to Yang Jing-yu, a letter that was obtained in Fusong on January 22 this year (1940). It is clear ... that they took the route via Dunhua, Dapuchaihe, and then Liangjiangkou." (The Movements of the 1st Route Army of the NAJAA, *Thought Monthly,* No. 77, Criminal Bureau of the Ministry of Justice, November Showa 15 (1940).)

The message for us from the Comintern at that time was brief, and concerned two matters. One was the invitation of the delegates of the KPRA and the 1st Route Army to the conference of commanders of the guerrilla forces in Manchuria to be convened by the Comintern. The other was the Comintern's opinion about the desirability for the anti-Japanese guerrilla forces in Northeast China to refrain from large-unit operations for the time being.

In those days, the Comintern and the Soviet Union were taking a new approach to the trend of development of guerrilla warfare in Northeast China. In the late 1930s, the internal affairs of the Anti-Japanese Allied Army movement were somewhat complicated. The 2nd and 3rd Route Armies

operating in northern Manchuria and in the Jidong area differed in their opinions about leadership, cooperation and some other problems.

To settle these differences, the Comintern discussed the matters in the Soviet Union with the delegates from the 2nd and 3rd Route Armies. In the course of discussion, they thought of inviting delegates from the KPRA and the 1st Route Army in southern Manchuria for a wider-ranging discussion, availing themselves of the meeting of the delegates from the Anti-Japanese Allied Army operating in northern Manchuria and in the Jidong area, in order to work out measures to effect an upsurge in the anti-Japanese revolution in the whole area of Northeast China and to coordinate the guerrilla warfare in Manchuria with Soviet Far East policy.

Of course, the messengers from the Comintern did not explain to us these details, but such an inference was fully possible from the military and political situation in the Far East region and from the policies pursued by the Soviet Union and the Comintern.

However, neither Yang Jing-yu and Wei Zheng-min nor I were in a position to leave the theatre of operations. Our absence from our units for a trip to the Soviet Union at a time when the enemy's large-scale "punitive" offensive was imminent might involve serious consequences in carrying out our new operations and badly affect the men's morale.

The Comintern's advice to reconsider the advisability of large-unit operations, too, was not to be accepted without reservation. Whether or not the suspension of large-unit operations might end in a passive, evasive dispersion needed prudent consideration.

After explaining our views about the two issues to the messengers, I sent one of them to Wei Zheng-min. Our Headquarters' correspondent code-named Mangang guided him.

I sent the records and photographs about the struggle of the KPRA to the Comintern through its messengers when they left the Hualazi secret camp. These documents would be safe in the Soviet Union, and we would be relieved of the burden of carrying them about.

There were about enough documents to fill a knapsack. The photograph

of me wearing spectacles, taken at a secret camp at Wudaogou, Linjiang County, was among them.

Unfortunately, the messengers were said to have been captured by Self-defence Corps men at a railway crossing in Helong County on their way back to the Soviet Union. In consequence, all the documents fell into the enemy's hands. Judging from the fact that our photographs appeared in the official records of the Japanese imperialists, it is evident that they suffered misfortune on their way back to the Soviet Union.

There was a Chinese named Ning among the messengers. A letter Wei Zheng-min sent to the Comintern mentioned that Ning had been wounded in a clash with the enemy.

Wei Zheng-min held the same opinions as we did about the two issues raised by the Comintern.

It was in the early 1930s that we first got in touch with the Comintern. It may be said that we were in fairly close contact with the Comintern during the first half of the 1930s.

From early 1936 to the autumn of 1939, however, we had almost no contact with the Comintern. Wei Zheng-min had been to Moscow in early 1936 to settle the differences about the anti-"Minsaengdan" struggle[7], an issue that had not been resolved at the Yaoyinggou conference[8]. After that, we did not send any messenger to the Comintern, nor the Comintern to us.

Frankly speaking, we felt no need to contact the Comintern. Since the question of the strategic line that would affect the future of the Korean revolution had settled in a reasonable way, we believed that all that we needed was to continue with the revolution in line with the decision adopted at the Nanhutou conference.

We advanced the revolution in keeping with this clearly-defined strategic line, and expanded the armed struggle into the homeland from the base on Mt. Paektu. It was our consistent attitude and part of our fighting spirit to lay down all our lines and policies independently, and carry them out in the revolutionary spirit of self-reliance. The Korean communists were short of many things and had many difficulties, but managed to overcome all these

obstacles by their own efforts. We didn't beg for anything from anybody.

Because we have the historical tradition and experience of firmly maintaining an independent revolutionary line ever since the years of the struggle against the Japanese, we are still the Party with the strongest spirit of independence, the nation with the strongest spirit of independence, and the country with the strongest spirit of independence, in the world.

There are many nations in the world that have fought guerrilla wars or modern wars using regular armed forces, to drive out foreign forces from their lands. But one can hardly find another example of armed resistance that has been carried out in such arduous conditions as in our country. We often say that we fought for 15-long years without our own home front and without any support from a regular army, and there is no exaggeration in this expression. When we say this, we are referring to the arduousness of the Korean revolution.

We are well aware that the Yugoslav guerrillas fought well during the Second World War. Considering, however, that Yugoslavia was occupied by the German army in April 1941, their guerrilla warfare covered only a few years. When Tito began his guerrilla campaign, a considerable part of the Yugoslav regular army remained in existence.

Moreover, the Yugoslav guerrillas received much aid from the Soviet people. According to Zhukov's memoirs, the Soviet Union sent hundreds of thousands of rifles and machine-guns alone to that country. The Yugoslav guerrillas were said to have received even tanks and artillery pieces from the Soviet people.

The Chinese people's war against the Japanese can also be explained in a similar way.

Jiang Jie-shi had several million troops under his command. You cannot say that his large army fought only against the communists. In fact, they had engagements with the Japanese, though in a passive and lukewarm way. If Jiang Jie-shi's army contained the Japanese even a little, that should be considered support for the Chinese people's guerrilla war. The expression, Kuomintang-Communist Cooperation, should be understood as meaning joint resistance against the Japanese.

In Korea, on the other hand, the regular army ceased to exist in 1907, and we began the armed struggle more than 20 years after that. When we started the armed struggle, there was no remnant of the regular army.

Because the country had gone to ruin, a home front was totally inconceivable.

There were some rifles that had been left over from the Righteous Volunteers and Independence Army, but these were all outdated and so rusty that they were useless. We had to obtain every single rifle at the risk of our lives.

There would be no end to it if we were to dwell on all the hardships we suffered during the armed struggle and the bitter trials our guerrillas underwent in the mountains for nearly a decade.

Still, we never turned to others for help.

As I have said on many occasions, the Comintern paid great attention to the revolution in large countries like China and India, but not much to the Korean revolution. Some people in the Comintern regarded the Korean revolution as an appendage to the revolution in China or Japan.

Even in its relation to the Chinese revolution, the Comintern showed great interest in the revolutionary struggle in the heartland of China, but it may be said that it cast only a glance at the revolution in Northeast China. The world knows that the Comintern sent Borodin and Blucher to the Kuomintang as advisers, and it sent Voitinsky, Maring and Otto Braun to the Communist Party of China (CPC).

By contrast, it sent no advisers to help the revolution in Northeast China.

If it gave any support to the revolution in Northeast China, it was only for the 2nd and 3rd Route Armies. It would be no exaggeration to say that the Comintern was almost indifferent to the KPRA and the 1st Route Army, which were fighting far away from the Soviet-Manchurian border.

The Comintern's slighting of the revolution in Northeast China can be seen clearly from the fact that it brought commanding officers from Manchuria to the Soviet Union to give them training, but it sent most of them to China proper, not back to Northeast China, after their training. Liu Han-xing, chief of staff of the 2nd

Corps of the Northeast People's Revolutionary Army, and Li Jing-pu of the 5th Corps, with whom we had waged joint struggles in the guerrilla zones in Jiandao, were assigned to Yanan after their training in the Soviet Union, instead of returning to the place of their origin. Only after Japan's defeat did they return to Northeast China.

Records left by the Japanese say that the revolution in Northeast China was carried out with the support of the Soviet Union or the Comintern. That is not true.

At one time, the Japanese claimed that I had been trained in the communist university in Moscow and that I had come to Manchuria in command of a crack unit from the Soviet Union in the summer of 1938. Some Japanese official records also said that I had trained my men in the Soviet Union with its support for quite a long time before I came back to Manchuria, or that I had returned to Manchuria after the Zhanggufeng incident[9] and exerted great influence in Dongbiandao.

This kind of propaganda was aimed at describing us as people acting under the instigation and control of the Soviet Union, or of foreign forces, in order to weaken and obliterate our influence upon the people in our country.

To tell you the truth, we owed nothing in particular to the Soviet Union or the Comintern in those days. When we were in Wangqing, we wrote to the Soviet Union asking for the construction of a factory to supply us with grenades, but they did not even answer. So we made "Yanji bombs" on our own and used them.

So how was it that the Comintern, which had been somewhat cool and indifferent to the revolution in Northeast China and in Korea, took the unusual step of sending messengers to us and inviting us to the Soviet Union in 1939?

It may be explained that the change in its attitude was, in short, the requirement of the military and political situation in the Soviet Union in those days, when an invasion by Japan seemed imminent. The Soviet Union, which became wideawake to the Japanese imperialists' wild ambition for territorial expansion and their piratical nature through the Lake Khasan incident and the

Khalkhin-Gol incident[10], was fully aware of the danger of Japan's imminent northern expedition and, in cooperation with the Comintern, was seeking every way to cope with such an invasion.

At this point, the Comintern attached special importance to finding potential allies capable of giving armed support to the Soviet Union on its flanks and behind enemy lines, and to realizing military and political link-ups with these allies. The KPRA and the NAJAA were the only forces capable of providing armed support for the eastern flank of the Soviet Union. The Comintern regarded the anti-Japanese armed forces in Northeast China as one wing of the Soviet Far East forces, as their outer-line forces, and tried to make them a detachment of the Far East forces. The Soviet Union was of the same opinion on this matter.

It seems that the Soviet people, who had paid no particular attention to the anti-Japanese resistance movement in Northeast China in the first half of the 1930s, realized that the guerrillas in Manchuria were not to be slighted only when they saw the KPRA and the NAJAA taking powerful offensives behind the enemy lines in support of their country at the time of the Lake Khasan and Khalkhin-Gol incidents. From that time, they made every effort to strengthen ties with us.

The Comintern also made concerted efforts with the Soviet Union. Subordinating everything to the support of the Soviet Union was the basic mission and a consistent policy of the Comintern.

This does not mean, however, that the Comintern and the Soviet Far East military authorities were in complete agreement in their views on the anti-Japanese forces in Northeast China. The Comintern considered that the guerrilla forces in Manchuria should place emphasis on preserving themselves intact until a war broke out. But the Far East military authorities insisted that a powerful military offensive to prevent the Japanese troops from moving deeper into the Chinese hinterland was imperative, because the whole of China was now already in a state of war and sacrifice was unavoidable.

Anyhow, it was a notable change in its policy for the Comintern to take

more interest in the anti-Japanese movement in Northeast China and invite us to the Soviet Union to discuss important strategic and tactical problems. This meant that we had grown into a powerful force that could provide armed support for the Soviet Union behind enemy lines.

However, we reserved judgement on the Comintern's proposal. We did not suspend large-unit operations, nor did we visit the Soviet Union. We stayed in Manchuria instead, and resolutely carried out our large-unit circling operations as planned and foiled the enemy's offensive.

As a result of the victorious large-unit circling operations, we were able to map out a new fighting policy on our own initiative. If we had paid a visit to Khabarovsk at the invitation of the Comintern at that time or had immediately switched over to small-unit actions, we would not have been able to carry out the large-unit operations.

In the autumn of Juche 29 (1940) the great leader received another invitation to a conference convened by the Comintern. Its messengers braved all sorts of perils to reach his Headquarters. Looking back on the event, he said as follows:

I received a second message from the Comintern in mid-October 1940. At that time, all the units of the KPRA were engaged in small-unit actions everywhere, in line with the policy adopted at the Xiaohaerbaling conference.

Two messengers from the Comintern came to see us. They said that they had been sent by General Lyushenko working in the Headquarters of the Soviet Far East Forces, and that the general had given them a message in the name of the Comintern to the effect that I was invited to a conference to be convened by the Comintern at Khabarovsk in December. They also conveyed to me the Comintern's instructions that all the anti-Japanese armed forces in Manchuria should switch over from large-unit operations to small-unit actions, and that they should move as soon as possible into the Soviet Far East area to establish bases there and regroup.

While working in the Headquarters of the Far East Forces, Lyushenko dealt with the Comintern's affairs. Later, I went to Khabarovsk and met him there.

"Hello, Comrade Kim Il Sung. It's very difficult to get to shake hands with you," he said and explained how he had sent small groups of men to get in touch with me. I got the first impression that he was an attractive man of ardour and friendship.

Lyushenko often used the alias Wang Xin-lin, doing a lot of work to establish contact mainly between the Comintern or the Soviet Union and us.

According to the messengers, the Khabarovsk conference of the commanders of the guerrilla forces in Manchuria convened by the Comintern in early 1940 had ended in a meeting of only the delegates from the guerrilla units in northern Manchuria and in the Jidong area because of the absence of the delegates from the KPRA and the 1st Route Army.

However, the Comintern did not abandon the original plan, and was set on holding the conference of the commanders of all the armed forces in Northeast China to discuss the direction of the development of the anti-Japanese resistance movement in Northeast China and straighten out the difficult situation facing the Soviet Union.

The messengers arrived in October 1940, but the Comintern had issued the notice on the convocation of the conference in September that year. Telegraph messages had been sent to the 2nd and 3rd Route Armies, but we received the message through the messengers because we had no wireless communication system. The Comintern invited the commander-in-chief, political commissar, Party secretary and other major military and political cadres of each route army to the Khabarovsk conference.

I notified Wei Zheng-min of the arrival of the Comintern's messengers, and proposed to him to take joint measures for the event.

Wei Zheng-min said that he ought to attend the conference to be held on the authority of the Comintern, but that ill-health did not permit it. He asked me to represent not only the KPRA but also the 1st Route Army of the NAJAA and the South Manchuria Provincial Party Committee .

The Comintern's idea of small-unit actions was in agreement with the policy we had adopted in this regard at the Xiaohaerbaling conference.

The military and political situation in this period was much more difficult

than in late 1939 and early 1940, when we were engaged in large-unit operations. In other words, it became difficult to move about in large units.

In the first place, the enemy had completed setting up a network of internment villages, which obstructed our procurement of food supplies for large units. We often obtained a handful of food grains or a piece of maize cake only at the cost of our blood and the blood of our comrades.

The enemy in those days were putting special efforts into what they called eradicating the basic roots and ideological work.

The enemy's policy of internment villages in this period was much more vicious than the one they had pursued against us in West Jiandao. They burned down houses located outside the fortified villages to "keep the people away from the bandits", tightened the control of food grain, ammunition and other supplies, were bent on searching for and arresting people "in secret touch with the bandits", and strictly guarded ferries and other river crossings. The control of illicit opium cultivation was unusually severe at this time.

At the same time, they clamoured about "relief for the poor" and "working for the people's livelihood" in order to demoralize the revolutionary masses and other sections of the population.

Our experience proved that small units in action found it relatively easier to obtain food than large units. The food problem was a vital consideration in working out strategy and tactics. Food took priority over tactics. Can you fight without eating? I use the expression, "food, clothing and housing", instead of "clothing, food and housing" from my experience of many hardships due to food shortages in the years of guerrilla warfare.

If we operated in small units, moving in and out of the Soviet Far East region, it would be convenient to do political work among the people and to train the cadres of our units. We should also be able to engage in military actions in the summer season, and military and political training in the winter season in places recommended by the Soviet Union, with ample time and space. It would also provide favourable conditions for preserving and developing our forces.

In the late 1930s and the early 1940s we lost many cadres because of the enemy's large-scale "punitive" operations.

We informed the messengers from the Comintern of the fact that in view of the requirement for the development of the anti-Japanese armed struggle, we had adopted at the Xiaohaerbaling conference the policy of preserving our forces and undertaking small-unit actions, and said that we would take into consideration the invitation to move into the Soviet Union.

Securing a breathing space as well as geographical space for regrouping in a situation in which the enemy was making frantic efforts to destroy us would be beneficial to us not only for the armed struggle at that time but also for its future development. In addition, a base for us to settle down in was needed to preserve and consolidate our forces.

At that particular moment we paid a lot of attention to the need to preserve our forces, because we were convinced that the day of ultimate victory of the Korean revolution was near at hand.

In the latter half of 1940, the conflagration of the Second World War enveloped the whole of Europe. Everyone had a foreboding that a war would break out between the Soviet Union and Germany. Japan was planning another war in the southern hemisphere, even before it had been able to crush China. It was as clear as day what the outcome would be if Japan were to provoke a war against the United States and Britain.

The best thing to do in this situation was to avoid a frontal clash and preserve and build up our forces. This view of ours was in basic agreement with that of the Soviet Union and the Comintern.

It was welcome news that the Soviet Union was ready to provide us with a base in its territory where we could assemble, regroup, and preserve and build up our strength, and to give us the military and material support we needed.

However, I did not make a hasty decision about our move to the Soviet Union, because it was an important matter that required prudence. The first problem was how long we would be staying there: Would we be there for a short time or for a long time? If we were to establish our base there and remain there for a long time, how could we continue with the armed struggle? Would we be able to move back when necessary into our

homeland or into Manchuria? How could we give leadership to the movement in the homeland if we were in the Soviet Far East region? These were questions that required answers.

In these circumstances, I contemplated a number of choices.

The first option was for the commanders to go to participate in the conference, leaving behind the main force where it was at the moment, and then continue the struggle in the original theatre of operations on the return of the commanders. The second option was for the commanders to go first to attend the conference, and then take our unit into the Soviet Union at an appropriate time, after sizing up the situation there. The third option was to make our participation in the conference and our unit's entry into the Soviet Union coincide, and take further measures while in temporary residence there.

I settled the matter on the principle of reinforcing our secret base in the Mt. Paektu area even in case of our entry into the Far East region and, on this premise, of establishing a new base in the Soviet Union. So I needed time and detailed information regarding the situation.

My original intention had been to develop small-unit actions in the area under our control during the winter, in line with the policy adopted at the Xiaohaerbaling conference. So we had been making preparations for the winter operations, and it was not advisable to abandon these preparations.

On the basis of this analysis and judgement, I put off giving my answer to the request of the Comintern. We continued with our winter preparations while waiting for the persons we had sent to the Soviet Union to investigate the situation in detail and return to inform us of the results.

We gave Ri Ryong Un an assignment to open a new route to the Soviet Union and report on the feasibility and safety of the route we had been using.

Ri Ryong Un was a regimental commander who was renowned for his fighting skills in the 3rd Directional Army. He became regimental commander as successor to Jon Tong Gyu when the latter fell in the battle of Dashahe-Dajianggang in Antu County in August 1939.

Ri Ryong Un was to go to the Soviet Union carrying Wei Zheng-min's letter to the Comintern. But he did not go for some reason.

He was a man of large build and looked much older than he actually was. He was reticent and prudent. Usually he was quiet, but on the battlefield he was courageous and swift in action.

Once his unit raided an internment village in Dunhua County because the unit had run out of food on the march. The reconnaissance party had reported that there were only three enemy soldiers in the village. The original plan was to send a machine-gun squad to destroy the enemy, but Ri Ryong Un said that there was no need to send a machine-gun squad against only three enemy soldiers, and that he would go with his orderly to deal with them and then give a signal for the rest of the unit to move into the village. His orderly was Thae Pyong Ryol.

When darkness fell, Ri Ryong Un and his orderly went down to the internment village and walked straight into the barracks without being challenged. In the main office, however, there were approximately 30 officers being given a briefing.

The orderly, who followed him into the room, said in subsequent days in recollection of the event that at that time he thought that he would never get out of there alive.

Ri Ryong Un, taking out his revolver, said in a calm and composed manner: “You are surrounded. Stick your hands up!”

The senior officer grabbed Ri’s revolver. Ri Ryong Un pulled the trigger, but the gun misfired. He pulled it back so hard that the Japanese officer let go of the barrel.

Ri Ryong Un reloaded his revolver and shot the officer down, kicked off the resisting officers, and overwhelmed them single-handed. Many officers were shot to death.

All this time, Thae Pyong Ryol stood by the door, without firing a single shot. Only when he heard Ri Ryong Un shouting, “Pyong Ryol, guard the wall!” did he notice scores of pistols hanging on the wall.

Ri told his orderly to collect the pistols, and took the officers in the room prisoner. That night he and his orderly captured all the enemy soldiers returning from a “punitive” action.

Ri Ryong Un became renowned as a peerlessly courageous, audacious and talented commanding officer in the raid on the Emu County town and in the battles at Dashahe-Dajianggang, Yaocha and in many other battles.

I think I gave him the mission on the outskirts of Xiaohaerbaling. I met him and Im Chol at the same place. When I told him to open a safe route to the Soviet Union, he said that I need not worry about that.

When he and Im Chol were opening the route on the Soviet-Manchurian border, Rim Chun Chu and Han Ik Su left for the Soviet Union, escorting the wounded and infirm.

The wounded and infirm comrades reached their destination in safety, but Ri Ryong Un, who had departed with the mission of an envoy, died a heroic death in an encounter with the Japanese. He had carried out his assignment to open the route and succeeded in sending the wounded to the Soviet Union by that route. The other part of his mission was to go to the Soviet Union and inform us of the situation there. While proceeding to the border to carry out the mission he thought of providing new clothing for his companions, who were in rags, saying that the delegates from Headquarters to the Soviet Union should be decent in appearance. He decided to obtain clothes with the help of a charcoal burner with whom he had been in touch.

But the charcoal burner was a turncoat, who had once worked for the revolution but had become a secret agent of the enemy. He said he would go to buy clothes for Ri Ryong Un, but brought back with him a hundred enemy soldiers. Ri fought against heavy odds and died heroically after mowing down scores of the enemy.

Contact with the Comintern, which had been interrupted for several years, was re-established in this manner.

In subsequent years, I maintained close touch with the Comintern and worked hard to strengthen solidarity with international revolutionary forces.

# 4. The Autumn of 1940

Reading articles recently about the history of the anti-Japanese revolution, I have found some phases that need deeper exploration, although historians have made many research achievements in this field.

Especially, information about the events in the period centring on the Xiaohaerbaling conference is scarce.

The autumn of 1940 was unusual. Several tomes would not be enough to cover all the tortuous events we experienced. Because we were engaging in small-unit actions after the change-over from large-unit operations, we did not have big engagements like the Battle of the Fusong County Town or the Battle of Jiansanfeng.

Everyone says that no march was so hard as the Arduous March and no period was so trying as the period of the Arduous March in the history of the revolution against the Japanese. That is correct. It may be said, however, that the trials we underwent in the autumn of 1940 were no less severe. During the Arduous March we had to endure unbearable physical hardships, whereas our adverse circumstances in the autumn of 1940 were another trial in which our mental sufferings were just as great.

Strong will power is needed to endure mental suffering just as much as for physical hardships. And the process of their endurance is accompanied by a ceaseless struggle with oneself. Our experience in the autumn of 1940 was exactly of this kind.

After adopting the policy of change-over from large-unit operations to small-unit actions at the Xiaohaerbaling conference, we reorganized ourselves into many small units under the 2nd Directional Army, in keeping with the changed fighting strategy.

After designating the missions and areas of activity for the small units,

I moved towards the Yanji area in command of a small unit.

At that time, Kim Il's small unit was given an assignment to operate around Wangqing and Dongning, and O Paek Ryong's small unit was given the task of obtaining food grain for the winter around Yanji and Antu, before they were sent off on their assignment.

We waited for O Paek Ryong's small unit at the edge of Facaitun, Yanji County. But there was no word from them for many days.

I did not wonder why, because in those days it cost us blood to obtain even a single ear of maize. To obtain a few pounds of cereal, it was necessary to break into an internment village, a venture that had to be made at the risk of our lives.

Throughout the previous summer, we had lived almost entirely on boiled-down *musuhae* (a plant of the family Compositae–Tr.). There were plenty of these plants in the mountains, but by themselves they could not dispel the feeling of hunger, no matter how much we ate.

A reconnaissance party, which had been sent to look for a possible source of food, came back with a report that they had found a farmhouse down at the foot of the mountain. They said that there was a spacious ploughed field around the house, in which three Koreans were living. They added that if we asked them, we might get some food grain.

I sent Kang Wi Ryong to the farmhouse, telling him to talk to the farmers, without hiding the fact that we were guerrillas.

When he asked them for help, they were reticent, saying that they would have to go to Mingyuegou to obtain food, but that they could not get past the enemy's surveillance. After thinking it over, however, they said it would be ignominious to decline the guerrillas' request, and left for Mingyuegou.

Hearing this report from Kang, I ordered my men to be wideawake and stand guard with especial vigilance.

The men on mess duty were preparing gruel from *todok* (Codonopsis lanceolata–Tr.). This plant, if crushed and boiled down, made something like gruel, and when mixed with a little cereal it tasted very good. It was the best of similar grass foods.

Just as the gruel was coming to the boil, Son Jang Chun, who was standing guard, shouted that the enemy was swarming upon him. The men rushed to the guard post, but said that they could see no enemy anywhere. Still, Son Jang Chun insisted that the enemy was approaching, pointing down towards the foot of the mountain. But there was nothing but tree stumps where he was pointing.

A man who has had a fever can be subject to such a hallucination, and Son had had a fever not long before.

While I was calling the officer on duty to account for having posted a sick man to keep watch, the alarmed men in the kitchen threw away the gruel that had cost us much effort.

A few days later, I received a report that the farmers who had gone to Mingyuegou to obtain food, had returned together with a man in a Western suit, who was requesting an interview with me. The man turned out to be Choe Yong Bin who had once been a company commander of the Wangqing guerrillas.

He was one of the best fighters as well as a man of great physical strength.

Once he had come to see me and asked me for leave of absence, saying that he needed to recuperate from exhaustion. I had sent him home on leave so that he might hunt in the backwoods of Xiaowangqing and help the Party organization there in its work.

Later on, he had been charged with involvement in the "Minsaengdan" case. He fled to the enemy-ruled area, leaving behind a note to his wife, which said, "Good-bye to you and the baby. I would hate to be killed on a false charge of involvement in the 'Minsaengdan' case while fighting for the revolution. So I am going away. I will continue to work for the revolution there." His wife, who had given birth to the baby only a few days before, came to see me in tears, with the note. Her face was swollen probably because of ill health after delivery. The baby seemed to have trouble breathing.

How can you run away to the enemy area to save your own skin, deserting your wife and baby in distress! Are you a man at all? These feelings

of indignation flared up in my heart. Though condemning him for his cold heart, I hoped that he would continue to work for the revolution, as he said in his note.

We looked after his wife and baby, and later sent them to the Soviet Union, together with our wounded men.

Now, after five years, that man, Choe Yong Bin, appeared before me again. Our current circumstances were worse than at the time of the "Minsaengdan" hullabaloo.

He had climbed up the mountainside carrying a knapsack from which a pan was dangling. The fact that he was in good shape gave me the impression that he had not gone through many hardships. "How many years has it been?" he bellowed, as he stepped into the Headquarters tent, and hurried towards me.

I received him cordially. His past was not without blemish, but he had been an officer under my command at Wangqing.

He immediately reeled off a lengthy account of how he had trekked around in the mountains to join the guerrilla army again. I asked whether he had eaten, and he said that he had just had a meal of boiled rice down the hill. He produced a packet of rice, dried flatfish and a bottle of liquor from his knapsack.

I noticed that the pan tied to the knapsack was not sooty at all. It was strange that a man who said that he had been trekking in the mountains looking for the guerrillas for many days and had boiled rice only a short while before, had a brand-new pan.

I did not doubt that he had degenerated into scum of the Earth like Ri Jong Rak. There had in fact been a rumour in my unit that Choe Yong Bin had surrendered to the enemy.

Not knowing that he had aroused my suspicions, he filled a cup to the brim with liquor and offered it to me as a token of a memorable reunion.

When I declined, his hand holding the cup suddenly began to tremble. Hearing my angry voice, he must have felt that his real identity had been revealed.

I demanded that he tell the truth, how he had met the farmers, and what was his real purpose in coming to see me.

He instantly realized that it would be useless to lie any further. He confessed that the three men in the farmhouse were enemy spies, and that, hearing their report, he had brought three “punitive” units, which had now surrounded the area. At his signal the “punitive” troops were to fall upon us.

I felt that we were trapped.

My heart, however, ached more at the fact that Choe Yong Bin had become a lackey of the Japanese imperialists and had so shamelessly appeared before me than at the thought of the danger that had to be faced with a determination to fight to the death.

What appalled me more than that was that he was resorting to all kinds of absurd rhetoric to try to persuade me to surrender: “General Kim, I know how hard your circumstances are,” he blabbed, reading my face. “The whole of Manchuria is swarming with Japanese troops. No matter how hard you might try, it would be useless now. General Kim, you have done all that you can for the good of the nation, and no one will blame you even if you surrender right now. Those who have surrendered are sitting pretty. They say that if you come down, they will give you the position of governor of Jilin Province.”

Unable to hear him out, I interrupted with angry words: “Yong Bin, how is it that you’ve come to this pass? You were once a company commander at Wangqing. Shame on you! We were sorry that we had lost a good commanding officer when you deserted your wife and child. How dare you come to see me in this wretched state? Do you have an iota of human conscience, you who have thrown yourself into the enemy’s embrace, abandoning your family? You have degenerated in a shocking way.”

A man who thinks of himself alone ends up like this fellow.

Choe Yong Bin’s treachery had started already when he left the company on an excuse of ill health to live in the backwoods of Xiaowangqing, I should say. At that time he placed his own health above the revolution. He later claimed to have run away to the enemy area to escape death on a false charge

of involvement in the "Minsaengdan" case, but that was the outcome of his weak faith in the revolution.

As Choe Yong Bin's case shows, one step back from the road of revolution will end up in treachery. That was why I always said to my men that the only way for a revolutionary to follow was the road of revolution, dead or alive, that going astray from this road would lead to reaction, to treachery, to being human scum, and that a man who would abandon the cause of revolution, afraid of the rain and snow, bullets, hunger, marching through mountains, prison and gallows, would instantly change his colours if he was dragged to the rack a couple of times and forced to gulp down peppered water.

It can be said that treachery begins with the discarding of conscience. This is the lesson we learned from the incident of Choe Yong Bin.

A considerable number of people left the guerrilla zone for the enemy area, as Choe Yong Bin did, in those days, when many people were executed on false charges of involvement in the "Minsaengdan" case in Jiandao. But most of the revolutionaries stood firm in the revolutionary ranks, instead of deserting the guerrilla zone, although they were unfairly subjected to persecution, stigmatized as "Minsaengdan" members. Why? Because they could not afford to sell out their consciences even if they were to be murdered, because they knew well that deserting the cause of revolution was the way to counterrevolution and nowhere else. As you can see, the revolutionaries considered it a disgrace and a living death to abandon their consciences and turn away from the red flag of the revolution. They thought that, in short, it would be an inhuman act.

In the years of the Shenxiandong guerrilla zone, there was a woman guerrilla named In Suk in Pak Song Chol's company.

One day she showed a letter secretly to Pak Song Chol, who was on sentry duty. It was a letter from her husband, the commander of another company. The gist of the letter was that he was "bound with a red rope", meaning that he had been charged with involvement in the "Minsaengdan".

In those days, Pak Song Chol was an instructor in charge of the young

guerrillas of his company. From the point of view of her attitude towards her organization, it was a good thing that she showed the letter to her instructor to discuss her problem with him. She said to him that because her husband had been branded a “Minsaengdan” member, she, too, would not be safe. She asked him what he thought about her going down to the enemy area, instead of suffering undeserved death.

Pak Song Chol advised her that that would be absurd, that going down to the enemy area would mean abandoning the cause of the revolution and surrendering to the enemy, and that she should by no means do so.

She said that she was not giving up the revolutionary struggle, but escaping from the “Minsaengdan” uproar.

Pak Song Chol explained that by leaving the revolutionary ranks she would end up becoming a counterrevolutionary.

The woman guerrilla realized at last that she had been on the brink of going astray, wandering from the road of revolution. It was fortunate that Pak Song Chol gave her good advice. Had he encouraged her to run away if she didn’t want to be killed, what would have happened to her?

In Suk continued to fight in the revolutionary ranks and died a heroic death in battle, so I heard.

When poised between revolution and desertion, she was able to choose revolution, because she took her personal affairs to her instructor, instead of dealing with the matter as she pleased, and received advice from her organization. As a result, she regained her reason and overcame her vacillation like a revolutionary.

By contrast, Choe Yong Bin ran away, unlike a man of integrity, to the enemy area, leaving behind a note to his wife, not even thinking of getting assistance from his comrades in the revolution. If he had had valued human conscience even a bit, he would not have run away in that cowardly manner to the enemy area, deserting his wife who had just given birth.

He lost control of his personal feelings, and that decided his fate. Loss of self-control may result in committing an unimaginable capital crime. A man who thinks only of himself and regards his own feelings as absolute will

probably betray the revolution sooner or later. Treachery always starts from self-centredness, while the concept of the collective cannot and will not give rise to treachery.

Revolutionaries must, therefore, exercise self-control at all times and try to become accustomed to the concept of the collective. This means that revolutionaries must have clear consciences as well as engage in a ceaseless process of self-cultivation leading to self-perfection.

A man who thinks only of himself can never be a revolutionary, nor can he follow the road of revolution to the end.

At Nanpaizi, Ri Jong Rak, in the uniform of a Japanese army employee, appeared before me and advised me to surrender; at the time of the Arduous March, Ri Ho Rim ran away, and Rim Su San too became a turncoat; and now Choe Yong Bin had come to see me and was blabbing absurdities. How much heartache they caused me!

What was the crux of the question?

The point was that both Ri Jong Rak and Choe Yong Bin were men I had had confidence in and had taken loving care of. Had I not trusted them and had I not loved them so much, my heart would not have ached so bitterly.

Commander of the Korean Revolutionary Army was not a simple job, nor was the job of company commander in the Anti-Japanese Guerrilla Army. It would have been a different matter if the turncoats had stayed quietly at home. My heart ached all the more bitterly because these brazen-faced traitors appeared in front of their one-time commander and preached "surrender", without an iota of conscience and not at all ashamed of betraying the revolution.

How did they dare to appear so shamelessly before my face?

It was because they had become blind to the situation and degenerated to such an extent that they believed that the revolution had come to naught, and that, therefore, they could preach "surrender" to the face of their old commander with impunity.

Choe Yong Bin met the same end as Ri Jong Rak.

That day the enemy surrounded our mountain base in double and treble

rings. Campfires could be seen all around. No matter how tight they might surround us, however, they were not able to cover all the mountain. They usually posted sentries on ridges and valleys after surrounding us.

We slipped away down the mountainside, leaving the enemy to clash among themselves.

We crossed the road that led from Mingyuegou to Antu, and then took shelter in a nearby forest. While getting our breath, we saw the "punitive" troops fighting among themselves in the gorge of Facaitun, where we had been.

We disappeared deeper into the forest.

Because of this unexpected situation, we found it difficult to get in touch with O Paek Ryong's small unit.

Originally we and O Paek Ryong's small unit were to meet in the gorge of Facaitun. So somebody had to go there to meet his messengers–a very risky venture.

A more serious matter was that his small unit had no idea that the gorge was in the enemy's hands.

We sent Ji Pong Son and Kim Hong Su to the rendezvous.

When he had joined the guerrilla army at Changbai, Kim Hong Su had got the nickname of "little Bridegroom". He had a strong sense of responsibility.

Ji and Kim met the messengers from the small unit at the rendezvous the next day, and returned safely with a note from O Paek Ryong.

On their way to the rendezvous they had had a hair-raising experience. They had had to dodge from tree to tree to avoid the enemy's eyes.

Meanwhile, O Paek Ryong's small unit had obtained some food grain by raiding an internment village. Later they sent most of it to Headquarters.

From Facaitun we proceeded to the base in Huanggouling, Antu County. We decided to spend the winter of 1940 there, conducting small-unit actions.

To engage in small-unit actions and restore the damaged revolutionary organizations, building up a mass foundation, it was necessary to winterize ourselves properly.

I had given many other small units, in addition to O Paek Ryong's,

assignments to procure food rations, salt, cloth and other supplies needed for the winter.

Politico-ideological preparation was the most important of the preparations for the winter. It was especially important to give the men ideological training so as to help them keep their revolutionary faith, however difficult the circumstances might be. In addition, we had to tighten discipline more than ever to prevent any accidents.

Later, however, Kang Wi Ryong's small unit revealed a sign of ideological laxity. On their way back from their mission to look for a place suitable for setting up a secret camp, they came upon a stream teeming with fish and fired at them at random.

I felt a chill in my heart when I heard the account of the incident. How dangerous it was to fire shots when enemy soldiers were building a gun turret on a hill nearby!

Our plans for doing a lot of things, entrenched in the secret camp, might have fizzled out because of their gunshots.

Another thing that I still remember from those days is an incident concerning a cow.

Jang Hung Ryong was involved in this incident. Jang, a squad leader of the machine-gun platoon, was out in command of a small unit seeking to obtain food supplies in the vicinity of Jiapigou.

He came back with a cow that belonged neither to a lumber station nor to the "people's association", the cattle of which were branded with the Chinese character for "king" on the horns. It obviously belonged to a peasant.

We could, of course, make allowances for Jang's situation at the time. On their way down to a village to obtain food grain, they saw the cow on the mountainside. Jang Hung Ryong looked here and there for the owner of the cow, but in vain, and told his men to take it to the secret camp. He stayed at the spot where the cow had been tethered, to pay the price to the owner if he came.

Jang waited for a long time, but the owner did not turn up. So he returned to the secret camp without paying the price after all.

As we found out later, when the owner came to take the cow back he saw an armed man hanging about there, and ran away in fear.

Hearing this account of the incident, I got indignant at Jang.

It would have been another matter if he had been a raw recruit without a good knowledge of the regulations of the revolutionary army. I could hardly believe that a veteran revolutionary like Jang Hung Ryong could make such a blunder.

In 1932 he had lost a finger to an enemy bullet and been taken prisoner in an engagement with Self-defence Corps men. He soon escaped, however, and returned to his unit. At that time, the other guerrillas suspected that he might have been given a mission by the enemy and allowed to return.

He had made strenuous efforts to recover the confidence of his comrades and, in this way, endured severe hunger in the Chechangzi guerrilla zone and the Arduous March.

It was beyond my understanding that such a man could steal a cow.

Maintaining good relations with the people had been emphasized ever since we first embarked on the armed struggle, and this principle was clearly stated in the regulations of the revolutionary army. By 1940 our relations with the people had been maintained on a high level. How good were these relations? When local people brought aid goods to us we would return them as soon as possible.

In the spring of 1940 we engaged in a battle at Yangcaogou. When the battle was over, the local villagers sent us many chickens. We, for our part, offered them a price more than twenty times what the chickens were worth. The villagers were unwilling to receive the payment. They even got angry, saying that they were not the sort of people to sell chickens to the revolutionary army, to their own sons and daughters, and that we were indifferent to their goodwill. We had nothing more to say. It was natural that they were offended at us responding to their goodwill by offering cash. Then we said we would not accept the chickens if they refused to accept the money. The money and the chickens were passed back and forth several times. Finally, we accepted the chickens and they the money. When we

withdrew from Yangcaogou, we released the chickens for which we had paid.

Now this was only a recent event, not an event of many years or months before. But Jang Hung Ryong, ignoring this precedent, had transgressed the principle of maintaining good relations with the local people.

His comrades criticized him severely. They insisted that Jang would be unable to amend his mistake even by death.

Jang also criticized himself unmercifully.

Therefore, we only punished him and told him to return the cow.

He belonged to Kim Il's small unit and fell in battle in 1941, when I entered Manchuria again in command of a small unit.

When we were at the Huanggouling base, a man of Chinese nationality, named Cai, deserted.

He was unusually homesick. One Harvest Moon Day he was so homesick he ate moon cakes in tears. He was very weak-minded, so the Party organization had given him a lot of individual education.

As he had caught a fever, we sent him to a hospital in a secret camp. Later, Headquarters received a report that he had egged on a woman guerrilla of a cooking unit to join him in returning to their home village. He was not faithful to military service. When on duty, he used to doze off. When told to stand guard, he used to complain that he had a stomachache. One cannot carry out revolution against one's will.

At last he deserted us, turning his back on our goodwill, and to make matters worse, he soon came back as a guide for a "punitive" force.

Most of my men were out on a small-unit mission at that time. Only a few orderlies and I remained in the secret camp, so, as Headquarters, we moved to the backwoods of Mengshancun.

Small units and groups assembled there after carrying out their missions.

O Paek Ryong's small unit obtained hundreds of sacks of maize and stored them in secret places. They bought maize standing in the fields, harvested the crop, put the ears in hemp sacks and then stored them in chests deep in a forest nearly 13 miles from Fuerhe.

It was around that time that the Comintern sent its messengers to

invite us to the conference of Korean, Chinese and Soviet commanders to be held in the Soviet Union. As I mentioned before, I sent an advance party to the Soviet Union to get to know the situation there in detail, at the same time ensuring that the preparations for the winter in Northeast China were finished in keeping with the policy we had adopted.

Unfortunately, however, word soon came to me that all the stored food supplies had fallen into the hands of the enemy. Because Regimental Commander Bi turned traitor, the location of the stored food rations was revealed to the enemy. The regimental commander was a man, nicknamed Bilaogada, who had been saved by Kim Myong Hwa's kind nursing in the forest near Dunhua. Even the regimental commander turned renegade, unable to endure the hardship.

Having discovered the location of the maize storage, the enemy set fire to the forest and took away all the maize. Months of hard work came to naught overnight.

Despite all these setbacks, however, I did not despair. True, the difficulties in those days were great, but we had gone through many such before.

How arduous the hardships we had suffered on the tableland of Luozigou, the two expeditions to northern Manchuria, and the expedition to Fusong were! What an agonizing experience the Arduous March was!

We had endured all these trials. We had endured freezing cold, hunger and the darkness of despair. We had stood up, enduring heartache and grief over our fallen comrades.

That was because we all had firm confidence in the victory of the revolution, and always bore in mind the mission and responsibility we had undertaken before our motherland and nation. We always kept true to our revolutionary conscience, no matter what situation arose.

"Let us overcome this crisis, come what may, and bring about a fresh upsurge in the revolution. All right! Let us see who will be the winner!" I said to myself at Mengshancun at that time.

The sense of revolutionary mission in my innermost heart set me afire

with greater audacity, and with ardour and a lofty sense of responsibility for the revolution in the recurrent trials.

What was the way out?

A forced march was the sure way to break out of our dilemma. But such a course required ideological mobilization for inspiring the men with confidence and courage.

The upshot of this was the convocation of the Mengshancun conference.

I told my men frankly: "The situation is growing more and more rigorous and arduous. We all believe that our revolution will triumph and that our country will become independent, but nobody knows when. We have fought for some ten years or more already, undergoing all sorts of hardships. But it is difficult to say definitely how many more years we shall have to endure such sufferings–five years, ten years or more?

"It is clear, however, that the ultimate victory will be ours.

"Needless to say, our road ahead is beset with many difficulties. These difficulties may be much more serious–ten times or twenty times–than those we have experienced so far. So any of you who is not confident about following us to the end in carrying out the revolution may go home.

"If any of you wants to go home, we will give him travel expenses and food rations. We will not take issue with him for giving up the revolution. It cannot be helped if he is too weak and lacking in confidence to remain in our ranks. Anyone who wants to go may go. But you must say goodbye to us for ever when you go."

Hearing this, the men rushed to cling to my arms, saying tearfully: "General, we won't regret it even if we die without seeing the day of the revolution's triumph. Dead or alive, we won't leave you, General. How long can a man live after all? We prefer fighting here to the death to betraying our comrades and going down the mountain to live in submission to the enemy. We'll share life and death with you, General!"

Their resolve moved me to tears. You can't imagine what great strength and courage I derived from their determination. No speech, no matter how eloquent, could move people as profoundly as what the men said to me that day.

The pledge we made at that time was our resolve not to waste our own blood that had been dedicated to the great cause of revolution against the Japanese.

The conference held at Mengshancun reaffirmed the unbreakable unity between the commander and his men, the steel-like unity of the leader and the masses. This conference deepened the belief of the anti-Japanese guerrillas that the basic way of saving the anti-Japanese armed struggle from the current crisis was to keep their revolutionary conscience intact, and for the commander and his men to share the same lot through to the end.

The conference inspired us with a firmer conviction that the Korean revolutionaries would surely emerge victorious if they fought indefatigably with unshakable revolutionary faith and will.

At this very moment, a message came from the comrades I had sent to the Soviet Far East region.

The message again requested that Wei Zheng-min and I, and other delegates of the KPRA and the 1st Route Army of the NAJAA, come to the Soviet Union as soon as possible to participate in the conference of the Korean, Chinese and Soviet army commanders to be convened by the Comintern at Khabarovsk. The message also said that preparations had been made to receive the guerrilla forces coming to the Soviet Union from Northeast China, availing themselves of this opportunity.

The Comintern proposed that we spend the winter in the Far East region and then discuss measures for further operations to suit the circumstances.

Now that the Comintern's purpose of holding the conference was clear, and now that the other commanders of the NAJAA were said to have arrived, I decided to go to the conference in command of part of the main force of the KPRA.

Making this decision was not easy. In general, the men were reluctant to go farther from their motherland and leave the battlefield, even on a temporary basis.

When I announced the decision to the men after making it at a meeting of the commanding officers, some of them asked if it wouldn't be better for

myself and a few other delegates to go there, since the Comintern had invited the commander to the important conference, leaving the other men behind to continue the fighting.

Of course, it might have been an alternative. But I thought at that time that it was better to take the unit to the Far East region. So I said, "We are not going there to give up the revolution or to live there for good. I think I must participate in the conference this time, although I did not do so the last time, and discuss the future of the Korean revolution on a broader scale with the Comintern or the Soviet authorities. Doing so may be beneficial to us. I am not sure how long the conference will last, so I intend to take you, comrades, with me. I must not leave you behind when the preparations for the winter are not satisfactory. So let's go to the Soviet Union together, and return to the battlefield when the winter is over."

Later, looking back upon the rigorous autumn of 1940, I thought that I, as Commander, had made the right decision at the right time.

We finished the preparations to go to the Far East region and left Chechangzi towards the end of October.

Before our departure, I sent messengers to Wei Zheng-min and O Paek Ryong, both of whom were too ill to go with us.

O Paek Ryong, who had not met the messengers, searched the whole area of Antu looking for us, so I was told. He arrived at Chechangzi when we had already started off.

It was at that time that he and his men shed tears when they found the food supplies and winter clothing we had stored underground for them. The two straw sacks of rice and scores of padded clothes we had buried for them before our departure saved them from great difficulties over the winter.

Later, O Paek Ryong and his small unit came to the Far East region in our wake.

On our way there, too, we went through many hardships. In the daytime we mostly took shelter in woods and marched by night, which cost us much effort and time, to avoid the enemy's surveillance. But as far as Laotougou we marched at a stretch.

When we were marching towards Baicaogou, we encountered a “punitive” force. As we were crossing over a mountain pass in single file, the enemy was climbing up the pass towards us from the other side. We turned back and ran up over the ridge.

Kim Jong Suk, who was carrying a heavy load on her back, lagged behind, finding herself in a great danger.

When we crossed the ridge, I checked the column and found her missing. I went back onto the ridge and looked down the pass along which the enemy was approaching. Kim Jong Suk was plodding up under the weight of the heavy load. The enemy was pursuing, shouting that she must be caught alive.

I fired my Mauser at the pursuers. The Guard Company men also protected Kim Jong Suk with machine-gun fire. Thus she was saved.

We shook off the enemy and camped near Hamatang. That day the enemy prowled all around, so we had to lie hidden in foxtail millet fields near the village until dusk.

There were cabbages and radishes growing in the furrows, and we allayed our hunger eating them, but the cold was unendurable. We lighted candles to warm our fingers that were numb with cold.

From Hunchun onwards, two Korean peasants guided us nearly to the Soviet-Manchurian border. They said that beyond the mountain in front of us was the territory of the Soviet Union. We crossed the mountain and found a wide stretch of fields without any landmark. It was impossible to identify the boundary between the Soviet Union and Manchuria.

I told Ri Tu Ik to climb a tree and see if any river flowed in any direction and if there were any houses. He had been good at climbing trees since his boyhood. But he said that he could see neither a river nor houses.

We moved further to the east for some time, and found telephone lines in the woods. The insulators differed from those in China and Korea, so we felt that we must be in the Soviet Union, but further confirmation was needed before we moved on.

That night we sent out a reconnaissance party and took a rest for a good while. Then, we suddenly heard the crackle of machine-gun fire in the east.

Soon the reconnaissance party returned with the report that they had found a sentry box about four kilometers away, and that they had been discovered while they were fumbling with the cups and kettle there, and had fled. They said that, judging from the unusually large and clumsy shapes of the cups and kettle, it was clear that the sentry box belonged to the Soviet border guards.

The Soviet border guards fired their machine-guns all through the night. Our reconnaissance party must have alarmed them.

The next day, I sent Ri Ul Sol and Kang Wi Ryong to parley with the Soviet border guards.

They came back with some of the Soviet guards, but the language barrier caused us a lot of trouble. I said over and over again that we were Korean partisans and I was Commander Kim Il Sung. Fortunately, they seemed to understand the word "partisan" and my name.

Our journey to the Far East region of the Soviet Union was difficult in this manner. Although we were going there at the invitation of the Comintern, we had to suffer so much, for our route and time of entry into the Soviet Union had not been notified to the border guards.

Quarantine upon our entry into the Soviet Union delayed our journey for several days.

My men felt bored, spending whole days in one room, not doing anything in particular. Some of them sang all day. They sang all the revolutionary songs they knew; and when their repertoire was exhausted, they sang whatever ditties they had picked up many many years before. The sight was spectacular.

My comrades had a large repertoire of songs.

I went to their room and urged them not to feel too bored.

"You may be sorry about being delayed for several days at the border," I said, "but you must not think that the Soviet comrades are inhospitable to us. Every country has its regulations about border transit. There may be the necessary investigation of personal identities in accordance with the regulations. Quarantine is needed to discover carriers of diseases. Recently, the bacteriological research group of the Kwantung Army in Manchuria has

spread infectious diseases in the Soviet Far East region. So the Soviet government has adopted a decision to make strict investigations of people entering its territory. We have a lot of work to do as well as a lot of trials to go through. Our revolution is now facing a new phase, and the day of our national liberation is not far off. So we must make up our minds firmly and stoutly fight till the day of the liberation of our country, loudly singing revolutionary songs."

Then, Soviet guards took us to Posiet.

At the border post I met Kim Sung Bin who had been an interpreter for Hong Pom Do's volunteer army. He acted as an interpreter for us and the Soviet people. He knew a lot about Chechangzi.

Our women guerrillas saw Soviet women walking about freely and wearing fashionable dresses. They wondered aloud, in tears, how long it would be for Korean women to be able to walk about like them.

As you can see, each day of the autumn of 1940 was replete with hardships and trials. But even in the midst of these hardships and trials, we were not stifled but survived, because we faced and broke through whatever adversity cropped up, without wavering in the least, cherishing our revolutionary faith.

We never took a roundabout way when treading the thorny path. We always rushed straight forward to liberate the country. We never avoided any trial if it could hasten the day of the liberation of our motherland.

It may be said that revolutionaries are destined to go through trials, because the lives of revolutionaries who change the outmoded and create new things are always accompanied by trials and difficulties. A man who is afraid of trials or avoids them cannot be called a revolutionary.

I still remember the autumn of 1940. The mountains of Jiandao, where we used to sleep in fallen leaves in the late autumn, still swim before my eyes.

In the Soviet Far East region, where there were neither gunshots nor death, we felt as if we were in a wonderland. However, we still had many trials to endure, as five years still remained till the day of the liberation of our motherland.

# 5. My Memories of Wei Zheng-min

The great leader Comrade Kim Il Sung often recollected his experiences with Wei Zheng-min, a high-ranking political worker and military commander of the NAJAA.

His reminiscences give us a lot of information about the exceptional friendship between the great leader and Wei Zheng-min, the latter's personality as a revolutionary, his tragic end, his torment and wishes at the last moment of his life.

I made the acquaintance of Wei Zheng-min when he came to Jiandao to participate in the conference at Dahuangwai[11] as the representative from the Manchurian Provincial Party Committee. After that, he and I always shared warm friendship on the road of anti-Japanese struggle.

Wei Zheng-min was a professional revolutionary who had fought against the Japanese for the cause of patriotism from an early age. He had been trained at the military academy at Anyang, and when he was a student in Beijing he had participated in anti-Japanese demonstrations.

His revolutionary career, it may be said, entered a new stage when he moved his activities to Manchuria after the September 18 incident. In Manchuria he first settled down at Daowai, Harbin, where he worked as Party secretary.

Wei Zheng-min looked more like a university professor or a civil servant than a soldier. He was a meditative man who, had it not been for the revolution, might have devoted all his life to scientific research or to authorship.

He was characterized by sincerity, integrity and modesty. He was also sociable and not afraid to speak his mind.

One of the personal files of commanding officers of the guerrilla forces in Manchuria, kept in the Comintern's archives, reads:

“Wei Zheng-min. Deputy commander of the southern group. A member of the CPC. Secretary of the South Manchuria Party Committee. ... A politically well-qualified commanding officer.

“He enjoys high prestige among the guerrillas. No details about his past record.

“No negative information available from the Reconnaissance Bureau or the Ministry of the Interior.”

Wei Zheng-min, though a Chinese revolutionary, made unremitting, silent efforts to give support to the Korean revolutionaries and to promote the Korean revolution. How serious the issue was at the Dahuangwai conference! If he had not been fair and reasonable as the Party representative at that time, we might have found ourselves in very unfavourable circumstances. He, alone of all the other people, listened to me with attention, affirmed what had to be affirmed, and took into consideration what had to be considered. After the conference at Yaoyinggou, he took the trouble to visit the head office of the Comintern in Moscow to get answers to our complaints.

His visit to the Comintern proved very helpful to the Korean revolution. I still remember how warmly I embraced him when he returned to Nanhutou, shadowed by death all the way.

When he hugged me as he conveyed the Comintern’s view that my argument that the Korean revolutionaries should fight under the banner of the Korean revolution did not contradict internationalism, and that my statement that the struggle against the “Minsaengdan” had been conducted in an ultra-leftist way was right, as well as the Comintern’s conclusion that the Korean revolutionaries should lead the army of the Korean people and fight in Korea and on the Amnok River, I determined not to forget his efforts to assist the Korean revolution.

On the occasion of the Nanhutou conference, the warmth of friendship between him and me became redoubled. During the fortnight we spent together at Nanhutou, we had many conversations, and I gained a deeper understanding of him.

Wei Zheng-min supported my opinion about unit reorganization at the conference at Mihunzhen, and warmly welcomed the formation of the ARF later.

Around that time, he started to study the Korean language, saying that a smooth communication of ideas was essential for the joint struggle with Korean comrades. He dearly loved the Korean guerrillas. This was the expression of his internationalist support for and encouragement of the Korean revolution.

We, in our turn, did everything we could for Wei Zheng-min, as there is a saying that "Love is returned for love."

On our advance to the Mt. Paektu area immediately after the Mihunzhen conference, he was wounded near Fuerhe. At that time we had several war-horses we had captured from the enemy. We picked the best one and gave it to him. He then went as far as Maanshan on horseback with us. I got Pak Yong Sun to arrange medical treatment for him at Dajianchang.

Subsequently, Wei Zheng-min went to Yang Jing-yu to convey to him the Comintern's directive about the expedition to Rehe[12], and then came to see me when we were putting the finishing touches to the secret camp on Mt. Paektu after our advance to West Jiandao.

After his journey to southern Manchuria, Wei Zheng-min looked very ill. He had been suffering from chronic heart and stomach troubles. As he was a man who threw himself into any work, careless of his own well-being, on top of his weak physical constitution, his health went from bad to worse.

Once, while leading a group of his men over a mountain ridge he had a heart attack and fell unconscious. When I advised him to get treatment, he passed off the matter with a smile, saying that physical illness was not to be feared, but ideological ill-health was to be dreaded.

I gave Pak Yong Sun and Kang Wi Ryong an assignment to build something like a sanatorium in the vicinity of Hengshan for Wei Zheng-min. The Heixiazigou secret camp was situated in the battle area, so it was not suitable for the treatment of an infirm person like Wei Zheng-min.

He spent some time recuperating in the secret camp at Hengshan.

I sent Kang Wi Ryong and Kim Un Sin to Changbai to obtain tonics and nutrients for Wei Zheng-min. They bought artificial terrapin blood, rice, flour, tinned goods, milk and even pancakes for him at the cost of 200 *yuan* they had raised. He was especially fond of food made of flour.

On the lunar New Year's Day I celebrated the festival with Wei at the Hengshan secret camp. Pak Yong Sun made a noodle-press out of an empty tin, and Wei and I ate starch noodles and even drank a few cups of liquor on the festival that year.

Quan Yong-lin, commander of the 8$^{th}$ Regiment, also enjoyed the festival with us. He could cook wonderfully. He even brought with him different kinds of knives for slicing meat and cutting vegetables, and prepared a variety of dishes. He sliced meat as thin as paper and portioned the slices out from dish to dish and then sprinkled condiments over them like lightning. His skill was uncommon.

We also assigned men to Wei at his request. Hwang Jong Hae and Paek Hak Rim were my favourites, but I sent them to him because he had asked me for them by name.

Hwang Jong Hae was a man intelligent enough to cope with the job of company commander or regimental commander. He was capable of tackling any difficulty. He spoke Chinese fluently. He was also the right man to work among the masses.

Paek Hak Rim had served as my orderly for many years. He was faithful, straightforward and did not spare himself, so I had always taken him with me wherever I went.

He was with me when we attacked Pochonbo. When I was commanding the battle under a poplar on the Karim River, he ran about here and there to convey my orders to different units.

When the comrades of Choe Hyon's 4$^{th}$ Division were surrounded by the enemy at the time of the Battle of Jiansanfeng, I ordered the 7$^{th}$ Regiment and the Guards Company to charge to their rescue. It was Paek Hak Rim who conveyed the orders to these units at that time.

Once he asked me to assign him to a combat unit so that he himself could

fight, so I did as he wished. After some time, I asked him how he liked the combat unit, and he answered that he liked it very much but that he could not get along away from me, and asked me to make him my orderly again. So I brought him back to Headquarters.

He underwent the Arduous March with us. He was one of the men who shared a handful of roasted rice flour with me at that time.

If an officer and his men get along on such intimate terms, they will take loving care of each other as they would their own flesh and blood. To be candid, sending away such a man to work with another man went somewhat against the grain.

However, I sent him away without regret, because he was wanted by Wei Zheng-min, who was seriously ill.

Wei Zheng-min grieved at the news of Yang Jing-yu's death more bitterly than anybody else. He was so upset that he ate nothing for days.

Wei, who assumed command of the 1st Route Army after Yang's death, fought courageously.

That autumn, he was again wounded in battle. To make matters worse, he contracted a lung disease and became unable to command his army.

After killing Yang Jing-yu, the Japanese imperialists displayed his head on a post on a public street, and claimed that they had destroyed all the anti-Japanese allied forces operating in southern Manchuria. They also bragged that the anti-Japanese struggle in Northeast China would soon peter out.

The NAJAA was, in fact, undergoing severe trials both internal and external at that time. The Japanese "punitive" actions were growing more rampant as the days went by, and traitors and waverers were appearing one after another in the ranks of the armed struggle. Fang Zhen-sheng, the commander of a brigade, was captured and turned renegade around the time of Yang Jing-yu's death. On top of that, the mass foundation of the 1st Route Army in southern Manchuria was severely weakened.

This state of affairs greatly worried Wei Zheng-min, political commissar of the 1st Route Army and secretary of the South Manchuria Provincial Party Committee.

He thought that there were gaps and serious shortcomings in his work that had to be corrected.

He was a soldier and political worker who made strong demands on himself and was modest enough to learn from other people's experience and good points. He told me that he would like to hear about the experience of the Korean comrades, who had made great efforts to build up party and mass organizations in the wide areas of eastern Manchuria, Korea and West Jiandao even after the dissolution of the guerrilla zones.

In the years of the guerrilla zones, the revolutionary organizations had mobilized everything in all the counties in Jiandao. Even children aged six or seven marched around carrying clubs and singing loudly, doing the work of the Children's Corps. Women cast off the shackles of feudalism and rallied around the Women's Association. These organizations roused the people to activity. The masses turned out to fight shoulder to shoulder with the soldiers, to do farm work and set up the people's revolutionary government.

By contrast, the units in southern Manchuria had concentrated on military actions and slighted work among the masses after they left the guerrilla zones. After the high-spirited masses from the guerrilla zones moved into the enemy-ruled areas, the guerrilla units did not pay much attention to them, nor did they think of laying new mass foundations. In consequence, their ties with the people crumbled.

These units revealed the tendency to resolve all problems by means of military action and military confrontation. This tendency found its most glaring expression at the time of the expedition to Rehe.

Even when conducting an armed struggle, you must not regard military actions as everything. Guerrilla warfare is impossible without reliance on the masses, the mass foundation that supports and assists the army and provides it with manpower reserves.

When we were organizing the Anti-Japanese Guerrilla Army, we did not have many rifles, nor was our force large. However, we declared war against the Japanese without hesitation. We launched ourselves into the great war against the Japanese with firm confidence in victory and a strong

determination to destroy the enemy. To compare the fighting capability of our guerrilla army with that of the Japanese army that had powerful economic support was out of the question.

What, then, did we rely on when we started the great war against the Japanese? We made our decision to defeat Japanese imperialism on the strength of our politico-ideological, moral and tactical advantages based on our revolutionary outlook concerning the masses.

The absurdity of the expedition to Rehe was that the masterminds of the expedition attempted to fight the Japanese army in a frontal confrontation, away from terrain familiar to them, swayed by their subjective desire, without giving priority to their ties with the people and tactical calculations.

After the dissolution of the guerrilla zones, we had adopted the decisions of the Nanhutou and Donggang conferences, decisions to build the Party, to form the united-front organization, to reorganize the Young Communist League into an Anti-Japanese Youth League, and to extend the armed struggle to the area on the Amnok River and the homeland. Entrenching ourselves in the Mt. Paektu area, we had formed the ARF and expanded it quickly in the wide area of the homeland. We had taken all these measures because we valued work among the masses, who were to back up our military actions.

The KPRA benefited greatly from these organizations. Had it not been for them, we would have found ourselves in a fix, no matter how elusive the tactics we employed, in a situation when the enemy was making frantic efforts to separate the people from the guerrillas by building mud walls around their villages and prevent even a handful of cereals or a single thread from leaking through the walls.

The army in relation to the people is what the needle is to the thread; they must always exist in inseparable unity.

At a conference convened by the South Manchuria Provincial Party Committee, Wei Zheng-min got a decision adopted on sending well-qualified guerrilla officers to various parts of Manchuria to correct his past mistake.

It was fortunate that, though belatedly, he realized his defects and decided

to rectify the tendency of placing exclusive emphasis on military actions.

What he was concerned most about while struggling with his illness in the secret camp was how he could retrieve the huge manpower and material losses of the 1st Route Army and revitalize its strength, and how he could bring about a fresh upsurge in the south Manchurian revolution that had suffered failures and setbacks.

While racking his brains to formulate a flexible strategy in anticipation of the forthcoming great event and to change his tactics in line with the strategy, he was unable to make a decision to cope with the prevailing situation, and so he was extremely irritated.

As an option, he was thinking of effecting a link-up with the 8th Route Army in the interior of China, and waiting impatiently for a reply to the letter he had sent to the Comintern in April that year.

Here is a passage from his letter to the Comintern, which reveals his problem:

"We are now under attack from the cunning enemy in every quarter, when neither directives nor documents and correspondence from the central authorities are available to us because we have been completely out of touch with the central authorities ... since the autumn of 1935. ...

"We really feel as if we were aboard a ship without a navigator on a vast ocean, or like a blind child groping about here and there. Although the waves of the great revolution are raging, we are like a man who is cooped up in a strange house or locked up in a large, airtight drum. ... We have been suffering unexpected, serious losses in our activities since we lost touch with higher organizations."

The purpose of his letter was to give a clearer knowledge of the difficult situation of the 1st Route Army to the Comintern and the Central Committee of the CPC and to get active support from them for bolstering this army.

His expectations from the Comintern and the CC of the CPC were most unlikely to be met.

The Comintern, or the Soviet Union, was pursuing a policy of appeasement at that time, so as not to provoke the Japanese imperialists in Manchuria, in consideration of its own security, and the CC of the CPC was

up to its ears in fighting against the Japanese imperialists in a far-off theatre and was not in a position to help the revolution in Northeast China.

Wei Zheng-min pinned his hopes on the Comintern and the CC of the CPC for support in the circumstances because he had been away from military and political operations for some time, was unable to obtain the latest objective information for a correct estimate of the situation and was very weak in both mind and body because of ill health.

He was waiting so impatiently for a reply from the Comintern because he had strongly appealed for cadres and war supplies needed for the 1st Route Army.

He believed that support from the Comintern was the only way to revitalize his army.

At a time when the Comintern found it difficult to send even a messenger to him, where could it get cadres, and how and by which route could it send war supplies? I was of the opinion that restoring the damaged underground organizations to strengthen the mass foundation and receiving manpower and material support from them would be more reasonable than expecting impossible support from the Comintern.

After the conference at Xiaohaerbaling, I went to see Wei Zheng-min, who was getting treatment in the secret camp at Hanconggou. My heart ached as I saw his face so pale from illness. My comrades, who had been taking care of him, said they were worrying about his recurrent chronic illness, although his wound was healing up. It occurred to me that in the adverse conditions at the secret camp, it would be difficult to ensure his recovery.

Wei Zheng-min said that something like a stone was surging up in his chest. I shuddered at his words because I had heard my mother complain of such a symptom when she had had heart trouble.

Wei Zheng-min, however, tried to turn the topic to the immediate task of the guerrilla movement, and its strategy and tactics. I told him that we had adopted the policy of preserving and accumulating our revolutionary force in keeping with the prevailing situation and of changing over from large-unit operations to small-unit actions, and that we had taken practical measures in line with this policy. He expressed his support for our policy, saying that the

Korean comrades had made a correct estimate of the situation and formulated a correct strategy.

We had a long conversation about the situation and our future activities. We discussed the matter of sending the wounded, sick and infirm comrades to the Soviet Union and of obtaining winter food supplies needed for small-unit actions.

That day I advised him to go to the Soviet Union for medical care. However, worrying about the conditions of the 1st Route Army, he said he had too many things to put right to go to the Soviet Union. He asked me, instead, to inform the Comintern of the actual situation of the 1st Route Army in detail and confirm whether his letter had arrived there if I was to visit the Soviet Union.

I was distressed to see Wei Zheng-min worrying more about the future of the 1st Route Army than over his own ill health. Since the death of Yang Jing-yu, his army was undergoing severe trials.

The situation at that time did not permit me to visit the Soviet Union right away, nor did I have any intention of doing so. We promised to get in touch with each other through messengers, when necessary.

"Commander Kim, that is my request of you!"

That was what he said to me when I left the secret camp. That was his last will, for I never met him again.

The request was, in fact, simple and commonplace.

But I heard it with a heavy heart and understood its profound meaning. I believe he had meant to ask me to carry the revolution through to success, the revolution to which he had dedicated all his life and for which he had a close attachment. He might have meant to entrust the work of the 1st Route Army to me.

I cannot forget the look in his eyes as he made the request. It was a look of deep grief.

When I left the secret camp, I left food rations and other supplies for him, but my heart was heavy. Could rice or winter clothing revive him? What he needed was good health to carry out the revolution.

I impressed on Hwang Jong Hae and Kwak Ji San that they should do their best to cure him by whatever means.

They said they would take good care of him and told me not to worry.

My feet would not move on at the thought of leaving them behind on that nameless mountain. So I delayed my departure.

On my visit to Khabarovsk later, I complied with his request.

The officials of the Comintern said that Wei Zheng-min's letter had arrived without a hitch.

Wei Zheng-min's secret letter to the Comintern was made public after the Japanese imperialists carried the full text of the letter in their official publication, *Thought Bulletin*, No. 25, in December Juche 29 (1940).

The letter fell into the hands of the Japanese imperialists because it was contained in the kit of Ri Ryong Un, a regimental commander of the 3rd Directional Army, which was captured by the enemy when Ri fell in battle at Wangqing in the autumn of that year.

For this reason, it was understood that the letter had not reached the Comintern.

Who, then, delivered the letter that the Comintern said it had received without a hitch?

The following document kept in the Comintern's archives may be considered to give a clear answer to this question.

"Top secret. To the Executive Committee of the Comintern.

"I am sending translations of the report dated April 10, 1940 and two letters from Comrade Wei, Deputy Commander of the 1st Route Army and Secretary of the South Manchuria Provincial Party Committee of the CPC.

Sheliganov

August 10, 1940"

The document bears the date January 23, 1941, and Dimitrov's signature.

The first section of the letter reads:

"Our information comprises four sections. Many things have been omitted or overlooked here. So I hope that you comrades talk to the messenger Wang Run-cheng and find solutions to all the questions you are concerned about.

"He will tell you about the secrets which I have refrained from putting down in my letter.

"I stand special surety for the messenger."

The quotation suggests that Wei Zheng-min duplicated his letter to the Comintern, one copy to be delivered by Ri Ryong Un and the other by Wang Run-cheng. Slight differences can be found in some parts, but the basic content is the same in the two copies. The only major difference is that the letter discovered in Ri Ryong Un's kit says nothing about Wang Run-cheng.

Wang Run-cheng was known by his nickname, Wangdanaodai, when he was fighting in close coordination with the great leader earlier in eastern Manchuria. He was the political commissar of the 4th Regiment, 2nd Division, 2nd Corps of the Northeast People's Revolutionary Army, and later became the political commissar of the 2nd Division of the 2nd Corps of the NAJAA.

In the spring of Juche 30 (1941), the great leader came back to Manchuria in command of a small unit, braving great perils, and paid a visit to Hanconggou where he had last met Wei Zheng-min, but the latter and his company were no longer there.

The great leader heard the details about them several months later, at the end of the year.

When I returned from small-unit activities in Manchuria and Korea, Soviet comrades wanted to see me at once. A Soviet army colonel in civilian dress, who was said to have come from Vladivostok, appeared before me. He said that a group of people, supposedly a small unit of the Anti-Japanese Allied Army, had come across the Soviet-Manchurian border and was staying in Vladivostok. He added that they insisted on seeing me because I was the only person who could identify them.

Travelling to Vladivostok by car with the colonel, a thousand conjectures ran through my mind. Mightn't Wei Zheng-min be among them? Mightn't it be a false rumour that he had died of illness? I ardently hoped that he would still be alive.

The car seemed to be moving at a snail's pace, so I was most impatient.

On our arrival in Vladivostok, the colonel brought Kwak Ji San to me. I was surprised to see that aide-de-camp Kwak had grown so old in a single year as to be taken for a man in his sixties. His appearance testified to all the hardships suffered by Wei Zheng-min and his company.

Kwak Ji San had been a teacher in Yanji before he joined the guerrilla

army. Later he had become a political worker. In his early years, he had been in command of a guerrilla company in Yanji.

He was a seasoned revolutionary who had gone through all kinds of hardships. Many guerrillas had learned from him how to read and write.

He was good-natured and well-informed, and enjoyed respect from everyone everywhere. People respected him from the bottom of their hearts, because he helped them through thick and thin.

He was also generous. Some people called him a “twelve-width skirt”, which must have meant that he was magnanimous to everyone, or that he was like the mistress of a large family, a mistress who takes the trouble of looking after all the family affairs.

When the 1st Route Army was organizing its guards regiment, we had recommended him as Wei Zheng-min’s aide-de-camp for supply work. Since then, the men had followed him, calling him “aide-de-camp Kwak, aide-de-camp Kwak!”

Kwak Ji San did everything for Wei Zheng-min. More than once he ventured into the enemy-held area at the risk of his life to obtain food and medical supplies. It was no accident that Wei Zheng-min used to say that he was able to live long thanks to the aide-de-camp.

When his excitement at our reunion had subsided somewhat, Kwak asked the Soviet army colonel to bring the Mauser he had entrusted to him. The colonel did so, and Kwak told me in a choking voice that it had belonged to Wei Zheng-min.

I took the Mauser from Kwak, but I didn’t dare to ask what had happened to Wei. Anyway, the solitary revolver explained everything.

It was not until that day that I heard in detail about Wei’s death, as Kwak explained.

After I bade farewell to Wei Zheng-min at Hanconggou, he and his men moved to the secret camp at Jiapigou in Huadian County. There are also other places with the name Jiapigou in Wangqing and Dongning Counties, and in many other parts of Manchuria.

Wei’s company established two secret camps, one several miles north of

Jiapigou, the other a little farther to the southwest of the district.

Wei Zheng-min lodged in the first one. Hwang Jong Hae, Kim Pong Nam and a doctor named Kim Hui Son were with him. A machine-gun section of seven or eight men also stayed with them. Kwak Ji San, Kim Chol Ho, Ju To Il, Ri Hak Son, Jon Mun Uk and Kim Tuk Su set up their quarters in the second secret camp.

Kwak Ji San alone knew the locations of the two secret camps. He travelled between the two, carrying heavy loads of food and delivering messages. He obtained food rations with the help of puppet Manchukuo army officers with whom he had sworn *Jiajiali* (brotherhood–Tr.). These officers complied with all Kwak's requests. The commander of the special corps of gendarmes was also under his influence.

Both the puppet army officers and the special corps commander ran with the hares and hunted with the hounds. They brought food, salt and other supplies to the guerrillas in the mountains, and then took away worn-out clothes, shoes, pans and similar things from the guerrillas to make false reports that they had killed or wounded guerrillas, and got bonuses for doing so.

It was said that Wei Zheng-min had wielded his pen until the last moment of his life, writing reports, reviewing his guerrilla struggle and drafting documents relating to his unit. It must have been his revolutionary desire to work as long as he breathed.

When death was knocking at his door, he turned over his Mauser and his documents to his comrades, saying, "You vigorous young comrades must fight to the last. The revolution depends on you. The revolution is an arduous undertaking accompanied by bloodshed and sacrifices, but you must not be afraid of such hardships. Our bloodshed will not be in vain.

"You must go to Comrade Kim Il Sung without fail."

Wei Zheng-min died in March 1941, at the age of thirty-two. He died too young. There was neither a volley for his death nor a mourning ceremony. His comrades buried him with acute sorrow and great care.

Strange to say, one of his men, of Chinese nationality, sneaked down the

mountain and guided the enemy to his grave. There is no knowing why that man, Wei's favourite, did such a thing.

The enemy's report that they had killed him in action was not true. He was not killed in action, but died of illness. The Japanese were fond of such false propaganda. They exhumed Wei in order to get a bonus. Only barbarians could do such a thing.

The account of how the Mauser reached my hands also showed that Wei Zheng-min's bodyguards had undergone many excruciating experiences.

Wei Zheng-min handed over the Mauser to Hwang Jong Hae, whom he loved dearly and trusted deeply.

Hwang was in charge of communications at first. When necessary, he also acted as an interpreter for Wei. Later, he became the leader of the guards platoon, guarded Wei at all times and became his right-hand man. He translated documents and materials under Wei's instructions and wrote for him when he was too ill to write himself.

Hwang and Kwak guarded Wei to the last moment of his life. Hwang was a devoted guard.

Once, Wei's white horse disappeared from the secret camp. Leaving Wei in the care of a machine-gunner, Hwang went out to look for the horse. As he was tracing the horse's footprints he noticed enemy troops stealing towards the secret camp. They were also following the horse's footprints in the opposite direction. It was a critical moment. The guardsmen were all out obtaining food supplies, and only Hwang and the machine-gunner were by Wei's side.

Hwang hurried back to the camp, and, after hiding secret documents, ran through the forest, carrying Wei on his back. Bullets whistled like hail around him, but he clasped Wei in his arms, shielding him with his own body, and kept running. He was determined to save Wei, even at the cost of his own life. Wounded in the shoulder and unable to carry Wei any further, Hwang turned him over to the machine-gunner. He took the machine-gun himself, and held the enemy back with constant firing.

Being such a man, he was dearly loved by Wei Zheng-min. It was not without reason that Wei handed over his Mauser to him.

After the death of Wei Zheng-min, Hwang Jong Hae and his small unit moved to the secret camp where Kwak Ji San was. They hunted wild boars, bears and any other animals they could find both for immediate consumption and for supplies of food for the next march.

It was at this time that Hwang Jong Hae was killed in a hunting accident. As he was chasing a wounded bear the animal turned and mauled him to death. It was a tragedy that we lost such a loyal man in such an accident.

The Mauser was taken over by Ri Hak Son, a friend of Paek Hak Rim's from the same hometown. Ri Hak Son cleaned the weapon every day, in memory of Wei Zheng-min. He also met an accidental death.

After his death, Kwak Ji San took care of the weapon.

Kwak grew opium while conducting small-group actions, in preparation for moving into the Soviet Union.

It was probably around this time that Ryu Kyong Su and his small group met an old man who had been in touch with Kwak in the vicinity of Jiapigou. But because the old man kept this fact secret, Ryu Kyong Su failed to meet Kwak, and returned.

Kwak and his company obtained new uniforms and food rations including salt in exchange for the opium they had grown. In spite of these preparations, they experienced many hardships on their way to the Soviet Union. When crossing the Soviet-Manchurian border, they even took their trousers off and carried them on their heads across the river, so I was told.

The revolver reached me through several hands.

Later, Kwak Ji San joined Kim Il's small unit and moved into Manchuria. With the help of the puppet Manchukuo army officers with whom he had a *Jiajiali* relationship, he formed underground organizations and did political work among the people.

Kwak and other Korean communists, who had served as bodyguards for Wei Zheng-min, made every effort to put an end to the tendency of concentrating exclusively on military actions, the tendency over which Wei had been so remorseful in his lifetime, and to strengthen the mass foundation of armed struggle.

Kwak fell in battle, probably in 1943. He had returned to Manchuria on a reconnaissance mission, but on his way back after accomplishing his mission, he was shot by the enemy.

Wei Zheng-min gave us sincere support when the Korean revolution was undergoing the severest of trials. That is why I still recollect him with affection.

Whenever he had a difficult decision to make on practical matters, he consulted us. How deep the confidence was that he placed in us can be seen from the fact that after Yang Jing-yu's death in battle, he discussed exclusively with us the problems relating to the work of the 1st Route Army and the South Manchuria Provincial Party Committee.

When cadres of the 1st Route Army brought to him problems that needed his decision, Wei Zheng-min sent them all to me.

After Wei Zheng-min's death, the Comintern discussed with us all the problems relating to the work of the 1st Route Army of the NAJAA and the South Manchuria Provincial Party Committee.

Wei Zheng-min was an excellent man and an excellent revolutionary. For this reason, we helped him wholeheartedly.

Many people made painstaking efforts to take care of him, and many internationalist fighters protected him with their lives.

Wei Zheng-min was specially concerned about the Korean revolution, and cherished a special friendship for us.

According to our comrades who worked at his side for a long time, Wei Zheng-min always linked the future of the Korean revolution with us, and, therefore, he always told them to give loyal support to me.

Wei Zheng-min's life was beautiful because his life was the same both at its beginning and at its end. A man who has started his career for his country, for his fellow people, and for humanity must end his life for his country, for his fellow people, and for humanity. Only then will his life be remembered by people for ever as a noble and beautiful life.

In the years of the revolution against the Japanese, people's spiritual world was a pure one.

Since the emergence of modern revisionism in the international communist movement, not many people talk about internationalism. Even those who used to preach internationalism whenever they opened their mouths are now busy feathering their own nests.

The times were good when revolutionaries, though not well fed and well clothed, helped one another, regardless of nationality, offering food and other necessities to one another. Communists must not betray their internationalist duties and obligations anytime, anywhere.

CHAPTER 23

# In Alliance with the International Anti-Imperialist Foreces



*January Juche 30(1941)–July Juche 31(1942)*

# 1. The Khabarovsk Conference

In the summer of Juche 73 (1984) the great leader stayed overnight in Khabarovsk on his way back from an official goodwill visit to the USSR and the socialist countries of Eastern Europe. That day he recollected with deep emotion his life at the training base in the Far East region of the Soviet Union and the conference held in Khabarovsk.

Khabarovsk is a place I wanted to visit. When I was entering the Soviet Union I did so via Manzhouli, so I had no chance to visit Khabarovsk. But since I am returning home via Khasan and Tumangang Station, I have decided to stay here overnight. I have long wished to see this place again and my wish has been realized after scores of years.

In the days when the KPRA and the NAJAA formed the International Allied Forces (IAF) together with the units under the Soviet Far East Forces and waged a joint struggle, Khabarovsk became an important place where the officials from the Comintern and the communists and military cadres of Korea, China and the Soviet Union got together to exchange opinions and discuss the orientation and methods of their joint struggle.

In those days the Headquarters of the Soviet Far East Forces was situated in Khabarovsk. The Oriental Propaganda Department of the Comintern was also located there for some time.

It was in November 1940 that I first entered the Soviet Union by crossing the Soviet-Manchurian border, to participate in a conference convoked by the Comintern.

After going through the due procedures, I parted with my comrades and proceeded instantly to Khabarovsk, guided by a Soviet officer.

I gazed at the snow-covered land of the Far East region through the car window. Flashing before my mind's eye were the images of the

innumerable independence champions and patriots who had shed blood on this land. How many martyrs and patriots followed in vain the thorny road on this land, lamenting the national ruin and crying for the restoration of national sovereignty? Some came to obtain weapons, others to form organizations, and still others to ask for assistance for the prostrate nation of Korea. No one came to this land to see its sights. But the independence of the country was still a national task. Praying for the souls of my forerunners lying buried in this land, I made up my mind to win independence by our own efforts and thus avenge them.

My thoughts were complicated from the first step I took towards Khabarovsk. And why not, as it was the first time for me to attend a conference called by the Comintern? It was noteworthy that the Comintern had invited us to the conference. This signified that its leadership was paying a high tribute to the KPRA.

The Comintern had seldom invited Koreans to its meetings.

In the 1920s people connected with the Korean Communist Party frequented the Comintern, each carrying an ID card with a stamp produced by a seal made from a potato; nevertheless, these were factional visits aimed at winning hegemony. They were not activities in the true sense of the word aimed at promoting the communist movement. What these people achieved by their scurrying back and forth was the disbandment of the Party itself and the compulsory transfer of its members to the parties of other countries under the principle of one party per country.

As far as I know, the Comintern leadership rarely put forward the issue of the Korean revolution as an independent agenda item of any meeting.

After the breakup of the Korean Communist Party, the Korean revolution virtually disappeared from the view of the Comintern. What the Comintern was mostly concerned about in Asia was the revolutions in such big countries as China and India. Some people in its leadership prohibited the Korean people fighting in Northeast China from advocating the Korean revolution and issued one order after another that did not suit the actual situation, thus doing considerable harm to the Korean revolution.

It was at its Seventh Congress that the Comintern recognized the independence of the Korean revolution, and for the first time expressed its official support for it.

Despite its poor attention to the Korean revolution, we did not resent this too much, but supported the Comintern consistently and valued its work and the importance of its existence.

In the years after the First World War it performed great exploits in rallying the ranks of the communist movement and in ensuring the purity of those ranks to cope with the new situation. We made a due appraisal of the achievements of the Comintern that performed faithfully the role of an international vanguard for the victory of the world revolution.

With the dignity of being the masters of the Korean revolution and the pride of being full-fledged members of the international communist movement, the Korean communists strove for the victory of their revolution and at the same time made efforts to implement the directives of the Comintern aimed at promoting the world revolution.

I expected a great deal from the Khabarovsk conference. But I thought that the conference would not proceed smoothly, as it would be the first time for the representatives of the armed forces of three countries to get together and discuss issues of common concern. Nevertheless, I felt optimistic about the outcome of the conference.

In Khabarovsk the snow was knee-deep, and the weather was very cold.

As I had been fighting in forests for such a long time, everything in front of my eyes was strange. The peaceful avenues free from gunshot reports, plunder and hunger, the happy looks of the people striding along the streets, talking freely–all these were signs of the life we had been imagining as an ideal one.

Khabarovsk is entered on some atlases as Happu or Paekryok. In the past Korean people called Vladivostok Haesamwi. Many places in the Far East region have Korean names, like Ssangsongja, Yonchu, Suchong and Sosong.

I was told that Khabarovsk was so named after Khabarov, a pioneer of the Far East region. An impressive statue of Khabarov was standing in the plaza

of the railway station in the city centre. The population of the city was about 200,000 at that time.

On the very day of my arrival I met So Chol in our lodgings, and An Kil the next day. So Chol was to participate in the conference in the capacity of a member of the South Manchuria Provincial Party Committee, and An Kil as chief of staff of the 3rd Directional Army. I could not express in words the emotion of meeting the comrades-in-arms whom I had failed to see frequently because of battles when I went to and fro in eastern, southern and northern Manchuria.

The commander of the 1st Route Army, Yang Jing-yu, had fallen in action; Wei Zheng-min was bed-ridden; and Cao Ya-fan and Chen Han-zhang, both commanders of directional armies, had been killed in battle. In this situation, the three of us represented not only the KPRA but the South Manchuria Provincial Committee of the CPC and the 1st Route Army of the NAJAA as well. In other words, we were representing the Party organizations and all the guerrilla units active in southern Manchuria.

So Chol and An Kil informed me that Zhou Bao-zhong, commander of the 3rd Route Army, had come to Khabarovsk already in early November, followed by Zhang Shou-jian and Feng Zhong-yun, commander and political commissar of the 3rd Route Army, respectively, and Ji Qing, chief political officer of the 5th Corps. They told me that Kim Chaek and Choe Yong Gon were also in Khabarovsk, awaiting my arrival. All in all, officials representing the three route armies of the NAJAA and the Jidong, North Manchuria and South Manchuria Provincial Party Committees were all there.

Before the opening of the conference I met General Lyushenko from the Soviet Far East Forces, the representative of the Comintern.

He explained to me the purport and objectives of the conference of the representatives of the guerrillas in Manchuria and the Soviet army convoked by the Comintern and asked me to formulate, together with others, effective ways and means to meet the requirements of the new situation. He asked me to compile data on the composition of the South Manchuria Provincial Party Committee and the 1st Route Army and their achievements.

I acceded to his request, and compiled with So Chol and An Kil detailed data, which I sent to Wang Xin-lin on New Year's Day 1941.

Wang Xin-lin was the pseudonym of Lyushenko, chief of intelligence of the Soviet Far East Forces. In the days when the units of the KPRA and the NAJAA were in the territory of the Soviet Union, the men representing the Comintern, the Soviet Party and the Soviet Far East Forces went under the name of Wang Xin-lin. During the last stage of the Khabarovsk conference General Sorkin took over the duties of Lyushenko. Sorkin also went under the name of Wang Xin-lin.

In the archives of the Comintern there is the original text of the great leader's report written in January Juche 30(1941) in the capacity of representatives of the South Manchuria Provincial Party Committee (1st Route Army). The front page reads as follows:

Dear Comrade Wang Xin-lin,

As for all the questions you raised with us concerning the work of the 1st Route Army of the NAJAA from the spring to the summer of 1940, we hereby present answers to the best of our ability. Therefore, this report does not cover the situation of the 1st Route Army as a whole.

... ... ...

Bolshevik salute,

Kim Il Sung

An Kil

So Chol

January 1, 1941

Before the conference I had an emotion-filled meeting with Kim Chaek and Choe Yong Gon, and a reunion with Zhou Bao-zhong after a long separation.

An Kil and So Chol stayed in the same lodging with me until the day we left Khabarovsk after the conference. It seems as if it were only yesterday that we looked back on the bygone days and discussed with heart and soul the issues concerning the future of the revolution.

Already in late January 1940, a conference of the guerrilla commanders

from Manchuria called by the Comintern had been held in Khabarovsk. The KPRA and the 1st Route Army were not represented. Attending the conference were Zhou Bao-zhong, Zhang Shou-jian, Feng Zhong-yun and others representing the 2nd and 3rd Route Armies.

Reviewing the experiences and lessons of the guerrilla movement in Northeast China and analysing the situation, the conference defined the policies for future struggle and discussed the issues of establishing relations between them and the Soviet Far East Forces and realizing mutual cooperation. As a result, they reached a necessary agreement on taking unified action.

On the basis of this success, another consultative meeting was held in mid-March 1940 to strengthen mutual relations and cooperation between the NAJAA on the one hand and the Soviet military authorities on the other. Attending the meeting were the representatives of the 2nd and 3rd Route Armies of the NAJAA, the acting commander of the Soviet Far East Forces, the commanders of the Soviet troops stationed in Khabarovsk and Voroshilov, and Lyushenko.

At the meeting the NAJAA asked the Comintern and the Soviet army to increase their support for it. But the Soviet army requested that the prerogative of command over the units of the NAJAA be handed over to it. The commander of the Soviet troops stationed in Khabarovsk suggested that the armed units in Northeast China be separated from the CPC, explaining that in that case Soviet assistance to those units could be realized more easily.

This attitude of the Soviet side aroused heated controversy at the meeting, and only basic agreement was reached on the issue of the forms and contents of mutual support and cooperation. This matter was not solved satisfactorily, and was earmarked for further discussion at the forthcoming conference.

The gathering we frequently refer to as the Khabarovsk conference of 1941, in which I participated, was convoked in December 1940 and continued until mid-March 1941. It was held in an army barracks used by the Soviet intelligence service. The barracks were fenced off. The conference hall had been a secret rendezvous used by an operative.

As the senior officers and officials from the NAJAA, the KPRA and the provincial Party committees had got together here for the first time, in the first stage they discussed in real earnest for several days the measures to be taken to establish relations between the different route armies and provincial Party committees, and to take concerted action with the Comintern and the Soviet Union. Then, from early January 1941, they mainly discussed with the authorities of the Comintern and the Soviet Union the future of the anti-Japanese guerrilla movement in Manchuria and the contents and ways of mutual support and cooperation between them and the military authorities of the Soviet Far East.

Representing the Comintern and the Soviet Union were several people, including General Lyushenko.

Right from the beginning, the conference proceeded in an awkward atmosphere owing to the conflicting attitudes between the Soviet side and the NAJAA side towards the power of command over the NAJAA.

The other thing that made the atmosphere awkward was the discontent felt by the officers of the NAJAA at the absence of a representative of the CPC at the conference.

When calling the Khabarovsk conference in the name of the Comintern, the Soviet side had informed the Jidong and North Manchuria Provincial Party Committees that the Central Committee of the CPC would be represented at the conference. Nevertheless, no such representative appeared in Khabarovsk. The leaders of the NAJAA, who had long been keen for the restoration of their relationship with the CPC Central Committee, were particularly disappointed at this. Frankly speaking, their eagerness to participate in the conference was greatly influenced by their expectancy of meeting a representative of the Central Committee of the CPC.

I do not really know why the representative failed to go to Khabarovsk–perhaps the Soviet authorities had not informed the CPC Central Committee concerning the convocation of the conference, or the information sent had not reached it. Anyhow, the absence of the CPC representative aroused suspicion among some representatives of the NAJAA and induced

them to feel displeased with the purport of the conference, casting a cloud over its initial proceedings.

The conference proceeded in the form of round-table talks, without a separate communique. The representatives of the different route armies of the NAJAA reported on their work, broadening each other's knowledge and understanding needed for the discussion of the issues on the agenda. I reported on the activities of the 1st Route Army and the KPRA.

In the situation prevailing at that time it was impossible to present a comprehensive report on the military and political activities of the NAJAA.

The CPC did not provide a centralized and unified leadership over the activities of the NAJAA. Some people such as Zhao Shang-zhi and Zhou Bao-zhong tried in this way or that to establish relations with the Party Central Committee and thought about setting up a separate Party organization in Northeast China, but all such schemes failed. The North Manchuria, Jidong and South Manchuria Provincial Party Committees were conducting activities independent of each other. In this situation, the different route armies of the NAJAA had to fight in isolation.

It was no easy job to grasp the revolution in Northeast China as a whole and give guidance to it. As hundreds of thousands of Japanese troops were occupying Manchuria, it was very difficult for the CPC in China proper to guide the Party and military activities of the people in the Northeast.

The central issue discussed at the Khabarovsk conference was the orientation of the future activities of the NAJAA and the KPRA, how to establish correlation between the guerrilla warfare in Korea and Northeast China and the Soviet army, and how to adapt this to the new situation and develop it.

As for this issue, the Soviet side proposed that the NAJAA give up its independence and merge with the Soviet army, stressing the need to take substantial measures for a joint struggle in order to emerge victorious in the fight against world fascism, as the fascist forces of Germany, Japan and Italy were forming an anti-Comintern alliance and as the Second World War was continuing to spread. They went on that this would agree with the principle of

proletarian internationalism and benefit the revolution in Northeast China. This was in effect the issue the leaders of the NAJAA had opposed most stubbornly at the meetings of the previous year.

During that one year one dramatic change took place after another in the global political situation and in the military situation in the Soviet Far East region. The Soviet proposal reflected the trend of these situations.

In those days the Soviet Union saw a conflict with the German forces closing in upon its western frontier to be virtually unavoidable. If Japan were to attack it from the east at the same time as Germany did from the west, the Soviet Union would find itself in a dire predicament.

The Soviet people were making every effort to avoid a pincer attack from the east and the west. At the sight of the plan of cooperation presented by the Soviet side one could fully guess their anxious state of mind caused by the strained situation.

It was impossible for the Soviet Union, a country with one part of its large territory belonging to Europe and the other part occupying a vast area of Asia, to perfect its national defence only by defending one side of its long frontiers or by building up defence capabilities with which to repulse the enemy's attack on one side alone.

From the first days of its founding, the Soviet Union advanced the principle of making preparations to repulse enemies attacking simultaneously from the east and the west, and channelled great efforts into building up its defence capabilities. In view of this principle of national defence and their relations with Japan and China, the Soviet people tried from the outset to build the Far East region as an independent military unit. However, the First Five-Year Plan, with its emphasis on developing the economic and military sectors in the European region, could not extend its benefits to strengthening its military power in the Far East region.

It was the September 18 incident that directly occasioned the Soviet Union's drastic expansion and replenishment of its military strength in the Far East region. Stunned by the Japanese imperialist invasion of Manchuria, the Soviet people worried that Japan might advance into that region.

The Soviet forces in the Far East region before the September 18 incident amounted to 50,000 troops, 100 planes and 30 tanks. After that incident, the Soviet Union began to increase its forces by two, three and four times. And after Japan turned down its proposal to conclude a nonaggression treaty it deployed heavy bombers, new-type tanks, submarines and the like in the Far East to cope with Japan's threat of aggression. The agreement it concluded with Mongolia in 1936 was aimed at containing Japan. It further accelerated the arms buildup in the Far East region after its eastern frontier was greatly threatened by the outbreak of the Sino-Japanese War and the successive eruption of the Lake Khasan and Khalkhin-Gol incidents.

The Soviet proposal to put the NAJAA under the direct control of its Far East Forces was interpreted as a repetition of the proposal it had advanced one year previously and, worse still, it incited criticism that the Soviet Union, giving precedence to its political and military interests, was trying to subordinate the anti-Japanese movement in Northeast China to these interests.

In view of the situation prevailing in the Far East in those days there were some understandable points in the Soviet proposal. The threat of war fronts opening up both in the west and in the east was not a thing of the distant future, it was a hard fact near at hand. The Soviet Union did not want guns roaring in its eastern territory.

Clamouring that the anti-Japanese armed units in Manchuria were fighting under the instigation and directives of the Soviet Union, Japan tried in every way possible to find an excuse for invading it.

Proceeding from this actual situation, the Soviet Union, while strengthening its defence capabilities in the Far East region, channelled all its efforts into pre-empting a Japanese invasion by enlisting the necessary diplomatic methods to the full. In those days it had no allies with whom it could counter aggression by Germany and Japan. It pursued a policy of collective security so as to dispel the threat of war growing in Europe, but failed owing to the manoeuvrings of the Western imperialists. It had no allies in the East, either, that could help it by force of arms.

China was fighting against Japan, but it was receiving assistance from the Soviet Union; it was not an ally that could help the Soviet Union. As it wanted at least the east of the country to be peaceful, the Soviet Union had to be careful to give no excuse to Japan for an armed invasion.

The Soviet proposal to set up a military system combining its Far East Forces and the NAJAA was aimed on the one hand at giving no excuse to Japan for invading the Soviet Union and on the other hand at gaining an ally with whom its Far East Forces could collaborate in case of an anti-Japanese campaign.

With regard to the issue of merging, heated discussions took place in and out of the conference hall.

The leaders of the NAJAA had not the least intention of placing themselves under the umbrella of the Soviet Far East Forces. They insisted: We have fought bloody battles for ten years, eating and sleeping in the open, so what's all this nonsense of merging about? We can never give up the revolution in Northeast China. The Soviet side does not care about other people's problems; they only think of themselves. Their attitude disregards the revolutionary principle that the independent nature of the revolution of every country should be respected. This issue must be submitted to either Stalin or Dimitrov for a solution.

It was learned later that both Stalin and Dimitrov supported the NAJAA's attitude. As a result, Lyushenko was replaced by Sorkin in the end.

At that time the Soviet side anxiously wanted to know my opinion about the issue. They tried hard to convince me that their proposal did not proceed from national selfishness. But their explanation reeked of an insistence that the revolutions in Korea and China could be successful only when their own country was safe and their own revolution was successful.

I told them, "There is some sense in your proposal, and we know the conditions under which you had to conceive it. But, it is as yet a unilateral and premature proposal. It is true that Japan is watching for a chance to invade your country, but there are no immediate signs that a war will break out. Defending the country where the revolution has been victorious is

important. Nevertheless, what is more important is to promote the revolution in countries where it has not won victory. You seem to be slighting the revolution in Northeast China.”

The Soviet side asked me whether I was opposed to any form of merger.

“No, I am not,” I replied. “I am not opposed to a merger or forms of cooperation beneficial to both sides. What I am opposed to is an unreasonable merger through which one side slights the other or does not recognize its independence. The KPRA formed the Anti-Japanese Allied Army with Chinese comrades and is waging a joint struggle, and yet it is maintaining its independence. So there is no problem with the form of joint struggle. I am opposed not only to dissolving the KPRA in the Anti-Japanese Allied Army but also to placing it under the control of the Soviet army. This is because it would ignore our independence in its form and content. We can study further concrete ways and means how to effect a joint struggle of the KPRA, the NAJAA and the Soviet Far East Forces. We are of the opinion that the joint struggle, in its form and content, must not only be helpful to the Soviet Union but beneficial to the revolutions in Korea and China.”

After listening carefully to what I said, the Soviet side replied that I had given them a clue to putting an end to the argument which had been going round and round in circles and to concluding the conference, adding that they had got a very helpful hint from my words that day. They told me they would further study the issue of independence.

Supporting their determination, I said, “Let us stop insisting on unilateral points and conclude the conference at an earlier date. Every hour is precious for us, as we have to return to the various theatres of war as soon as possible to conduct small-unit activities, build organizations and work with the masses. It doesn’t stand to reason for communists to drag out a meeting wrangling over an issue. If everyone thinks reasonably on the basis of proletarian internationalism, no issue is impossible to be settled.”

Zhou Bao-zhong and Zhang Shou-jian also wanted to know my opinion on the issue.

I said to them: “If the independence of each force is recognized, I will not

oppose an international alliance of our armed forces. The crucial point is the form of such an alliance, and this needs time for further study. Though unilateral, the Soviet proposal contains a seed of reason. So let us not reject the proposal out of hand. With a comradely, unselfish attitude we should give the fullest play to proletarian internationalism and finish the discussion as soon as possible for the common good."

My proposal was supported at the conference. Our principled stand shown during the course of the conference was a positive force for realizing unity and cooperation between the revolutionary armed forces of three countries–Korea, China and the Soviet Union.

Assured that our strategic policy of preserving and building the forces of the revolution and switching over from a large-scale guerrilla struggle to small-unit actions was correct in that it fully met the requirements of the new situation, the conference discussed in real earnest waging small-unit actions with the main emphasis on preserving the forces of every unit of the NAJAA and the KPRA.

The discussion of this issue took two days or so. A consensus of opinion was reached relatively easily, but opposition was also encountered. Some were of the opinion that the switchover was a retreat from the revolution. Others doubted that we could defeat Japanese imperialism by engaging in small-unit actions, as they were not still satisfied with the large-unit actions. They claimed that, when the comrades in China proper were fighting on a grand scale by moving in large units, we, having started the anti-Japanese struggle ahead of them, might lose face if we fought in small units.

It was misguided to think that we could save face if we fought in large units and would lose face if we fought in small units.

On the issue related to the policy of conducting small-unit activities, I had a great deal of discussion with the Soviet and Chinese comrades inside and outside the conference hall. As we had already adopted the policy of switching over to small-unit actions at Xiaohaerbaling so as to preserve and build the forces of the KPRA and had accumulated successful experience of these actions, the Soviet and Chinese people expressed considerable interest in my opinion.

To them I said, “The situation has changed radically, and we have suffered considerable losses. The issue of preserving our forces mustn’t be neglected not only for the present situation of the revolution but for its future. Don’t think that we can defeat Japanese imperialism easily. For the KPRA and the NAJAA to defeat Japanese imperialism and liberate their motherlands, they must preserve their forces and build them up. If we engage in small-unit actions, we can briskly build organizations for an all-people resistance and obtain food more easily. Moreover, such actions enhance mobility. We have waged small-unit actions since the summer of last year and scored inspiring successes. These actions are worth taking. We can take large-unit actions later if necessary.”

However, although I explained the rationality of small-unit actions in some detail, this did not impress those who saw the actions as a retrogression. So we discussed the matter a great deal. Referring to the situation prevailing in Korea, Manchuria and the Soviet Union, I pointed out how sensible it was to switch over to small-unit actions. In the course of discussing the situation, the differences of opinion were basically thrashed out.

At that time we discussed the situation in real earnest. We had held many meetings before on this issue, but we had not discussed the situation as earnestly and as long as we did at the Khabarovsk conference.

To those who insisted on large-scale actions, I said, “It is the Comintern’s request that we refrain from large-scale actions. Behind this request are the aspirations and determination of communists of different countries to defend the Soviet Union and its achievements. If large-scale guerrilla actions exert a negative influence on the security of the Soviet Union, we should take this into due consideration, shouldn’t we?”

And to the Soviet delegate, I said, “You should not try to keep us here without good reason. We can’t advance the revolution if we sit with folded arms, doing nothing, on the plea of preserving our forces. We’ll continue to wage brisk political and military activities in small units in Korea and Northeast China.”

All the other delegates from Manchuria expressed support for my insistence. Frankly speaking, the Soviet people wanted us at that time to spend an easy time in the Far East region, conducting training and minor military reconnoitring. That way, they thought, they could avoid giving Japan an excuse to invade the Soviet Union.

But we could not wage the revolution in such a passive way. If we spent our time engaged in that degree of activities, what would it be other than eating the bread of idleness?

We concluded the discussion with the decision to put emphasis on small-unit actions, work with the masses, building organizations and fostering our strength. This coincided with the policy we had adopted at the Xiaohaerbaling conference.

The Soviet side promised that they would provide the NAJAA and the KPRA with bases in their territory. We decided to wage small-unit actions in the vast area of Korea and Manchuria with these bases as additional temporary ones.

After the conference the Soviet Union provided us with two bases in the Far East–one being Camp South in the vicinity of Voroshilov, and the other Camp North near Khabarovsk. We first occupied Camp South with some forces from the 5th Corps of the 2nd Route Army of the NAJAA. The remaining forces of the 2nd Route Army and the 3rd Route Army were stationed in Camp North.

At that time I, as Commander of the KPRA, took charge of Camp South; some time later I formed the 1st Contingent involving the KPRA and some forces from the 1st Route Army and, as Commander of the Contingent, took measures to wage small-unit actions.

That we became able to take brisk small-unit actions in Korea and Manchuria from the new temporary bases in the Far East region can be called a turning point in the history of the anti-Japanese armed struggle. Of course it was a tentative measure for the time being, but it was a meaningful first step towards developing the struggle to the point of winning the final victory in the anti-Japanese revolution.

Had we not taken these timely and active countermeasures as required by the prevailing situation and the developing revolution, we would not have been able to save the revolution from the imminent crisis nor win the final victory in the anti-Japanese revolution.

In the course of waging a revolution, one faces constant difficulties and adversities. But there were no ebb tides or lulls in our revolution. We neither vacillated in the face of difficulties, nor yielded to distress, nor lost the initiative to the attacking enemy. Had we yielded to adversities or stood on the defensive even once, the enemy would have trampled on our revolution without mercy. We always turned misfortunes into blessings, and unfavourable conditions into favourable ones, with the determination and courage that we would neither yield nor retreat even though it meant our end.

The Khabarovsk conference, along with the conference at Xiaohaerbaling, gave a new direction to our revolution. These two conferences were important gatherings in that they defined the contents and form of the anti-Japanese armed struggle in the first half of the 1940s, and induced the Korean revolutionaries to strengthen, with a firm conviction in the liberation of their motherland, the independent forces of their revolution and at the same time meet the pending great event on their own initiative.

After the meeting at Khabarovsk, while conducting political and military training in the temporary bases in the Far East region, we forcefully pushed ahead with the armed struggle and revolutionary movement in the homeland, basing ourselves in the secret camps we had built on Mt. Paektu and various other places in the homeland, expediting the day of national liberation.

When the great leader was conducting positive political and military activities after advancing a new line, strategy and tactics, the armies and police of Japan and Manchukuo, on full alert, schemed in various ways to counter these activities.

The following materials graphically show how confused the enemy were:

"The elements of the Korean Communist Party plotting against Manchukuo under the leadership of the Soviet Union now are the remaining forces of the old 1$^{st}$, 2$^{nd}$ and 3$^{rd}$ Route Armies. The centre of those activities is Kim Il Sung. ...

“Kim Il Sung is the military chief of the Okeanskaya Camp under the direct control of the Soviet Red Army.” (Case of Activities of the Rebellious Organizations of Koreans in Manchuria, Document of the Police Affairs Bureau of the Government-General of Korea sent to the chiefs of the provincial police bureaus, Showa 19(1944).)

“The strong bandit groups led by Kim Il Sung, Choe Hyon, An Sang Gil and Chai Shi-rong all entered the Soviet Union early this year and received various types of training in Voroshilov. After rearranging their forces and with a new policy they have been infiltrating Manchuria again one by one since April.” (Report from acting Mudanjiang consul Furuya, June 17, Showa 16 (1941).)

# 2. The Revolutionary Kim Chaek

One day several months after the demise of the great leader Comrade Kim Il Sung, Comrade Kim Jong Il said to some officials:

"In the Kumsusan Assembly Hall there was a safe used by the leader. No one, including his aides, knew what he kept in the safe.

"After his death we wanted to open it but we could not find the key. Some days ago we found the key and opened the safe to find… a photo of him posing with Comrade Kim Chaek.

"He usually kept all his photos in the Party History Institute. But he was keeping in his safe a photo he had had taken with Comrade Kim Chaek. This shows how dearly he cherished the memory of his comrade-in-arms Kim Chaek."

To be immortal in the memory of his leader–this is the greatest glory a man can win in his lifetime and the greatest happiness a revolutionary can feel. Kim Chaek was the loyalist of loyalists, standing on the peak of such glory and happiness.

How could he live for ever in the memory of his leader?

I met Kim Chaek for the first time at the conference the Comintern convoked in Khabarovsk. I also met Choe Yong Gon there. For this I will never forget Khabarovsk. Kim Chaek was representing the North Manchuria Provincial Party Committee and the 3rd Route Army of the NAJAA at the meeting.

As we stayed there for several months, not just a day or two, Kim Chaek and I frequently met each other. I shared board and lodging with An Kil and So Chol, and Kim Chaek would visit us and talk with us for a few hours before returning to his lodgings.

I was so impressed by my meetings with him that I still vividly remember the very first meeting.

He had a calm demeanour, and he was going bald even though he was not

yet 40. Strangely enough, even though I had not met him before, I had the strong feeling that he was an old friend of mine. I think it was because I had heard so much about him and had looked forward to seeing him.

After the usual exchange of greetings, I told him I felt that he was an old friend in spite of the fact that it was our first meeting. Kim Chaek replied that he also felt that Kim Il Sung was not in the least a new acquaintance.

The fact that Kim Chaek and I felt that way means we thought about, and missed, each other equally.

I had wanted to meet Kim Chaek and Choe Yong Gon so much that I had made special trips to northern Manchuria. Kim Chaek wanted to see me so much that he had visited Jilin in 1930. Choe Yong Gon yearned for a joint struggle with me so much that he had dispatched a liaison man to Jiandao four times.

Whether the theatre of our struggle was northern Manchuria or eastern Manchuria, we all thought at that time about the Korean revolution and never forgot that we were Koreans, revolutionaries and sons of Korea, who should devote their life to the liberation of their motherland irrespective of organizational affiliation and theatres of struggle.

This community of like minds can be said to have made the Korean revolutionaries in eastern and northern Manchuria continually miss and long for each other.

Why did Kim Chaek and Choe Yong Gon cast a covetous glance all the more at eastern Manchuria? It was precisely because they missed Koreans. While the 2nd Corps in eastern Manchuria was composed exclusively of Koreans, Chinese were in the majority in the 3rd and 7th Corps. Living among the Chinese whose language and customs were different from theirs, they could not but grow envious of eastern Manchuria, where hundreds of thousands of Koreans swarmed, and miss our units where Koreans were in the majority.

"Why did it take so long to meet Commander Kim?" Kim Chaek muttered to himself after we had exchanged greetings at our first meeting.

I did not know why, but his soliloquy went straight to my heart.

He did not let go of my hands for a long time, even after we had greeted each other. I looked at him, and saw that tears were brimming in his eyes. For a man of few words to show tears, how sorely must he have missed the Koreans in Jiandao and the units of Koreans?

That day I also shed tears.

Immediately after Korea was seized by the Japanese, Kim Chaek's father moved to Jiandao with his family. He had probably heard that Jiandao was a fertile land where a farmer could make a good living. The Haksong area, where they came from, was also fertile. But they could not escape poverty in their native land, however diligently they farmed.

Who does not cherish his native land? But people joined the northward exodus one after another to eke out a living.

Kim Chaek's parents thought that once they were in Jiandao, their troubles would be over. As they had three sons, they did not worry about labour. Nevertheless, the sons whom they had pinned such great hopes on abandoned the household and joined the revolution.

It was Kim Chaek's elder brother, Kim Hong Son, who let the wind of revolution into this household. During the March First Popular Uprising he cheered for independence on the street, fought in the Battle of Qingshanli[12] as a soldier of the Independence Army and joined the communist movement. In the Tonghung Middle School in Longjing, where he was a teacher, there were many students who had come from Russia. He was apparently introduced to the socialist ideology during contacts with these students. He worked as a district committee member of the Communist Party in Ningan County before being assassinated.

Kim Chaek's younger brother was also a prominent revolutionary. Kim Chaek told me that he had once come across an article in a newspaper about his younger brother being held in Seoul's Sodaemun Prison, but that he did not know what became of him later.

While tending the fields by day, Kim Chaek diligently attended night school.

At that time he threw himself into the revolutionary movement.

The organization he first affiliated himself with was the General Federation of Korean Youth in Eastern Manchuria (GFKYEM). Subsequently he was admitted to the Korean Communist Party. The Party cell he belonged to was under the influence of the Tuesday group[13]. Though he knew that the Korean Communist Party which had been organized in 1925 had been disbanded owing to factional strife, he did not hide the fact that he had been a member of a cell of that Party.

In those days there were two general bureaus of political groups in Manchuria, one being the general bureau of the Korean Communist Party, controlled by the Tuesday group, and the other being the general bureau of the M-L group[14], formed in opposition to the former.

Learning the inside story of factional strife filled with feuds for hegemony, Kim Chaek felt disillusioned with the hierarchy of the Communist Party. A turning point in his thinking came about at this time. Writhing in mental agony over the debacle in the communist movement resulting from factional strife, he heard the news that the Comintern had disbanded the Korean Communist Party while he was languishing in a prison cell. Though the Party had been stained with factional strife, its disbandment rended his heart.

Then, which path should Korean communists follow from then on? And what should I do? Kim Chaek thought when in prison and out of it, he told me. He could do nothing by relying on the existing generation of Party members, but there seemed to be no new force that could replace them. However hard he thought, the way ahead was bleak. In these circumstances, not knowing which way to turn and penniless, he decided to say thanks to his benefactor Mr. Ho Hon.

When Kim Chaek had faced trial, Ho Hon had defended him in the court. From the outset Kim Chaek had not asked for a lawyer. He had neither money to engage a lawyer nor did he want someone to speak for him. Then Ho Hon had volunteered to plead for him free of charge. This lawyer had undertaken to defend many revolutionaries and independence fighters in court, getting them released or their sentences reduced.

Kim Chaek stayed at Ho Hon's house for some days. When he was leaving Seoul, Ho Hon gave him an overcoat and travel expenses. With the 3 or 4 *won* he bought the train ticket and meals on the way.

The two men established relationship in this way. It was out of pure patriotism that Ho Hon defended Kim Chaek in the court. He did it free of charge as he was mortified to see a Korean patriot facing a penalty for doing what he, as a Korean, ought to do. Sympathy, solidarity and the obligation of an elder patriot–three feelings influenced him, I would say. All considered, Mr. Ho Hon was truly an excellent man.

After liberation, when Kim Chaek was Vice-Premier and concurrently Minister of Industry in the Cabinet, Ho Hon served as the first Speaker of the Supreme People's Assembly. How strange their relationship was, as a man who had stood in the dock in the past and a man who had spoken in defence of him became senior cadres of a state!

The day he was appointed Vice-Premier, Kim Chaek said to Ho Hon: "In the bygone days, sir, you spoke for me in the court; now you have the duty to criticize me. If I make mistakes, whether as Vice-Premier or as a private citizen, please take me to task without mercy."

Though good-natured, Ho Hon was a man of principle. He really would have criticized Kim Chaek severely had the latter made mistakes in his work. But he had no opportunity to do so, for Kim Chaek did nothing deserving scolding as Vice-Premier or as a private citizen.

Instead, Pak Hon Yong was always hated by him when Pak was Vice-Premier. Ho Hon advised me to be watchful of Pak, apparently because he felt some foreboding about him.

I can never forget how loudly Ho Hon wept over the news of Kim Chaek's death. He deeply grieved over his death, saying that my right-hand man whom no one could replace had passed away so early.

Kim Chaek told me that he was embarrassed to receive such kind treatment from Ho Hon and his family. He had done nothing particular for the nation, he said, but had been a tool in the hands of factionalists before serving a prison term. Yet Ho Hon's family took care of him as if he had

been an outstanding revolutionary, and he felt as though he was sitting on needles.

Even if I have to die one hundred times and come back to life one hundred times, I will live up to the people's expectations–this was what Kim Chaek determined when leaving Ho Hon's household for Jiandao.

Entering Jiandao, he heard the heartbreaking news that his father and wife had died of illness during his absence. Only his two infant sons were left in the house.

Nevertheless, he had no time to care about private affairs. He was informed that secret agents of the Japanese imperialists had been sent to arrest him. How cunning the Japanese imperialists were! They arrested revolutionaries, gave them a good beating and released them through the front door as if showing great generosity, before taking them in again through the back door. They were masters of such tricks.

Kim Chaek left the village, leaving his sons in the care of his wife's brother. In peasant's attire and with a shabby reed-hat on his head he went past the entrance to the village driving a cow belonging to his wife's brother. Reaching a hill the cow lowed ceaselessly for its calf left behind in the stable. The calf also bleated plaintively for its mother. Disguising himself was crucial, but he could not go further in this way. Hearing the mother and her young calling to each other so pitifully, he thought of the sons he had left in his wife's brother's house and wept in spite of himself. He felt sorry for the calf as well as for his sons, he told me. So he let the cow go. For the next 16 years he did not see his sons. Only a revolutionary like Kim Chaek could endure such an experience.

I asked him if he knew how his sons were getting on.

He replied he did not, saying, "If my wife's brother is still alive, they will keep body and soul together. If something bad has happened to his family, then my sons will be beggars. For all that, I hope that they remain alive. Then they will see the day of liberation sooner or later and meet their good-for-nothing father."

In Ningan, Kim Chaek heard rumours about us. After taking leave of his

sons, he proceeded to Ningan County, where he met his colleagues from his days in the GFKYEM and the Manchurian general bureau. They told him that a new force quite different from the ones of the preceding generations had appeared in Jilin, and that the leader of that force was Kim Song Ju, who, though young, enjoyed great popularity because of his affability. They added that they had heard Kim Song Ju had been arrested by the warlords and released, but they had not known where he was and what he was doing.

When I was in Jilin, I had contacts in the GFKYEM, so they must have had inside information about our activities. Many students from the area of Ningan County were studying in Jilin at that time.

Soon after this, Kim Chaek went in search of me. But by that time I had already left the city. He instead happened to meet in an inn some of my comrades, who had apparently been tailing him.

After confirming his identity and hearing the purpose of his visit to Jilin, my comrades said to him, "Kim Song Ju is not here at the moment. You seem to be in Jilin for the first time. Don't hang around here. Please get away. In the aftermath of 'Red May', the warlords are hell-bent on picking on revolutionaries. You can meet Kim Song Ju later. Please get away from Jilin before the police can lay their hands on you."

They then gave him travel expenses and saw him off. He went to northern Manchuria, where he was again arrested, this time by the Kuomintang army. While he was behind bars, the September 18 incident took place.

As soon as he was released, he was again detained by the warlord police and sentenced to death. It was quite nonsensical to give the death penalty to a man who, though a communist in name, had not yet been engaged in a movement worth mentioning and who had not harmed the warlords at all. Manchuria in those days was literally a land of lawlessness.

He escaped death by the skin of his teeth on the execution ground. An officer appeared and ordered that he not be shot. He seemed to be a progressive officer with strong anti-Japanese sentiments. Leaving the execution ground Kim Chaek thought the world was not so hard-hearted after all.

What lesson did he learn while undergoing all these trials? He told me

that, though he had tried to wage the revolution from the days of his youth, he had been on the run, doing nothing worth mentioning and wasting most of his time in prisons and on the roads, and that he had given the enemy blows on his own initiative only after taking up arms.

"The enemy regards revolutionaries fighting empty-handed as scarecrows," he said, laughing.

He meant that unless one armed oneself, one was a powerless and defenseless being, like a scarecrow, in front of the armed brigands. He said that this was the most important lesson of his life.

Hearing what he had to say, I thought he had learned a correct lesson. It was not only a lesson Kim Chaek learned through half his lifetime; it was also the general law-governed nature of the revolutionary struggle.

Revolution must be waged with the force of arms, and the end of all forms of struggle for national independence and social liberation is decided generally by the armed struggle. The basic factor of our victory in the anti-Japanese revolution was that we had our own independent revolutionary armed forces.

In the theatre of the national liberation struggle of our country there were various forces, like Kim Ku's, Syngman Rhee's and Ryo Un Hyong's, but the force that the Japanese imperialists saw as their most fearful enemy was our KPRA. And why? It was precisely because we fought against them tenaciously by the method of armed struggle, the highest form of national liberation movement, not through petitions, strikes, writings or speeches.

The victory of the anti-Japanese revolution convinced us of the correctness of the truth that revolution must be waged with the force of arms, and after liberation it induced us to hold fast to the line of building a revolutionary army and channel all our efforts into building powerful revolutionary armed forces throughout the whole course of building a new Korea and accomplishing the cause of socialism.

The power of a nation and its pride rest on arms. A strong army ensures a reviving nation and a prospering country. Independence is inconceivable apart from arms. If arms get rusty, the people become slaves.

That Comrade Kim Jong Il is today training the Korean People's Army to be an unrivalled, ever-victorious army and scoring marvellous successes in army building at the helm of the revolutionary armed forces is the most brilliant, historical achievement he has made in inheriting and consummating the revolutionary cause of Juche pioneered on Mt. Paektu.

Kim Chaek spoke a lot about the harmfulness of factions. He told me that it was because of factions that he had been thrown behind bars after doing nothing special, and went on:

"After experiencing prison life I keenly realized that the communist movement could not be waged through conventional methods and that unless factions were eliminated, nothing, let alone national liberation and class emancipation, could be achieved. I wanted to meet you, as I thought that if it was true that the force that had appeared in Jilin was a collection of people of a fresh generation separate from the Korean Communist Party and unrelated to any factions, I could join hands with them without hesitation."

He said that what could be called proper life for him started when he organized a guerrilla unit in Zhuhe and began an armed struggle. His life before then was one of roaming and groping, he said. It was true. From the time he organized the guerrilla unit in Zhuhe, he played a conspicuous part in the revolutions of Korea and China at important posts in the North Manchuria Party Committee and the 3rd Route Army of the NAJAA. The Korean and Chinese revolutionaries and peoples in northern Manchuria unanimously respected him and loved him as a veteran revolutionary.

"I have long looked forward to meeting you," he said. "Do you know how earnestly the Korean revolutionaries in northern Manchuria wished to see you? We fought always looking up at Mt. Paektu where your unit was fighting. Had I met you in Jilin, Commander Kim, I would not have experienced mental agony all this while."

He continued that when we had organized an expedition to the motherland and attacked Pochonbo, he had earnestly wished to shake my hands and extend words of gratitude to me in the name of the Korean revolutionaries in northern Manchuria.

Kim Chaek, known as a stern man, was surprisingly sentimental in front of me.

Saying that he had heard a lot of the news about eastern Manchuria and West Jiandao from the people I had dispatched to northern Manchuria, he told me that what he regarded as a model to follow in the activities of the main-force unit of the KPRA was the trait of unity between officers and men, between superiors and subordinates, and between the army and the people. In addition, he said, he admired the spirit of independence with which I had justifiably insisted on the Korean people's fighting for the liberation of Korea, holding aloft national liberation as the fighting programme, though fighting in an alien land.

Kim Chaek was well-acquainted with the course of my struggle. He even knew the story of how I had repaired a rifle stock for one of my men. He said that he had regarded me as a model in his revolutionary struggle and everyday life. He was such a modest man.

Though he held me up as a model, frankly speaking, he himself was a paragon of revolutionaries.

He had earned the reputation of being a fierce man, but he was a political worker who loved his men more than anybody else. Though he said he had been impressed by my anecdote about the rifle stock, there were as many uplifting anecdotes about his relationship with his men.

What is the combat power of a revolutionary army? It is love between comrades. Value and love your comrades. When you love, love them as you would your own heart. No one is more precious than revolutionary comrades in this world–this is what he stressed to his men.

Once a guerrilla from another contingent came to him with a document. Kim Chaek ordered him to sleep in his own quarters while he himself studied the document. At night he went to the quarters, taking with him a needle and thread, and patched up the messenger's clothes and underwear. When he was accepting the document, he had noticed that the messenger's clothes were torn, and decided to mend them. The messenger belonged to another unit, but he took care of him as his own father or brother would do.

After every battle he would congratulate his men. He did this not to them as a group, but meeting them one by one. He praised each in concrete ways–You did this and that well when breaking through the gate; you did such-and-such well when attacking the puppet Manchukuo army barracks; you did this and that well and this and that wrong when shouting to demoralize the enemy. According to those who had fought in northern Manchuria, the soldiers fought more bravely after getting this kind of review.

Kim Chaek worked in quite an experienced way with soldiers who were criticized or punished. When a soldier was criticized by his commander, Kim Chaek would meet him and examine him as to whether he had realized his mistake; if the man had not, he would talk to him persistently until he saw what he had done wrong.

The following happened when Kim Tae Hong was a platoon leader:

He once hurled severe abuse at an assistant machine-gunner. Under a hail of enemy fire, the assistant, who had joined the guerrillas only a short time before and had not been tempered in battle, fired in the air. Incensed, Kim Tae Hong shouted, "You, coward! If your life is so dear to you, put down the gun and go back to your parents!"

After the battle, Kim Chaek sent for Kim Tae Hong and said to him: "You mustn't treat your men in that way. He is a raw recruit, isn't he? How can you hurl abuse at a man who is in battle for the first time? Instead of abusing him, you should first set a personal example."

Thereafter, Kim Tae Hong never hurled abuse at his men.

For all that, Kim Chaek did not show only affection for his men. He was a commander of principle; he persuaded, criticized or punished his men according to the situation. When someone made a serious mistake, he would subject him to a severe rebuke.

This is what Jang Sang Ryong said in recollection of Kim Chaek after his death:

In the winter of 1942–i.e. when Kim Chaek was fighting with a small unit in Manchuria after the Khabarovsk conference–his unit suffered greatly from a shortage of food.

One day Jang went hunting outside the secret camp. Finally, at dusk he shot a bear and a wild boar. After burying the animals, he hurried off, but he could not reach the camp before dark, for he was exhausted and the way was rugged. He stayed overnight in a hunter's hut not far from the camp and returned the next morning. Kim Chaek had ordered his men not to use the hut, saying it could be used by enemy spies.

Learning that Jang had stayed overnight in this hut, Kim Chaek summoned Jon Chang Chol and ordered him to call Jang to account for it, saying Jang was not fit to be a guerrilla.

Jon Chang Chol asked him to forgive Jang this once, as Jang had thus far fought faithfully for the revolution.

Kim Chaek said, "No, I can't. Make him stand outside in the cold for three hours."

Jon Chang Chol took Jang outside as ordered. But before two hours had passed Jang was in such a pitiable state that Jon Chang Chol asked Kim Chaek to call Jang in, as he must have fully repented of his mistake by that time. Saying that attempting to commute the penalty given to a wrongdoer was an equal violation of discipline, Kim Chaek ordered his orderly to stand Jon outside as a penalty.

He called Jang into the tent only after the passage of three full hours. He told him to take a meal first. Jang sat at the table, but he could not eat the food put before him. He realized to the marrow of his bones what he had done wrong.

Kim Chaek sat near him and said in a gentle voice: "You might think your mistake was not so serious. That's wrong. Why do I take it seriously? It is because your mistake might reveal the whereabouts of our small unit and consequently ruin our revolutionary task, not to mention our safety. This is why I ordered the men not to use that hut. However, you neglected the order of your superior and risked your life overnight. What would have happened if there had been spies there?"

Jang engraved every one of these words on his heart, he told me.

Kim Chaek was a man of few words, but each word he spoke was so weighty that it was as inviolable as an article of the law.

Once the enemy, to dishearten the anti-Japanese guerrillas, spread the rumours that Kim Chaek had been arrested, Pak Kil Song had surrendered, such-and-such a contingent had defected and some calamity had overtaken Ho Hyong Sik.

The commanders and guerrillas, who were well aware that these were sheer lies, were enraged. Disgusted by the false rumours, the commander of the 2nd Contingent decided to teach the enemy a good lesson, and drew up a plan to make the enemy pay dearly. He lured an enemy spy who was roaming about his camp and asked him to go down the mountain and negotiate with the military police for the surrender of his contingent.

The military police informed him, through the spy, of the place and time of surrender, promising the contingent commander a generous reward. The police, guided by the spy, appeared at the promised place at the set time. Grinning at the contingent standing in lines in the forest, the police even waved their hands to them.

At that moment the guerrillas aimed their rifles at them, shouting, “Stay where you are!”

The contingent commander said, “You fools! We came here not to surrender, but to capture you. Hands up!”

The enemy leader protested.

“I have heard that the communist army does not tell lies. How can you go against your promise? An army must keep faith.”

“Shame on you,” the contingent commander replied. “How dare you talk about faith when you spread false rumours and tell lies every time you have a chance? As you tell so many lies, we also told a lie.”

The contingent returned with the captured police. All praised its commander, saying he had done a great meritorious deed and a successful operation. It was similar to the incident of Pak Tuk Pom who had been criticized for advertizing his “surrender” in order to capture food.

Kim Chaek gathered the officers of the 2nd Contingent and criticized them severely, saying, “To think that the guerrilla army could lie like the enemy do! What on earth is this way of thinking? However false the game was, how

could you use the surrender of guerrillas as a trick? You are not entitled to be officers of a revolutionary army."

He then demoted all the officers, including the contingent commander.

Perhaps this makes you think that Kim Chaek knew nothing besides punishment. But he was not an officer to give punishment at random.

Let me tell you another anecdote.

In a battle a guerrilla was so flustered that he retreated, carrying only his grenade-launcher, and leaving his knapsack full of grenades behind on the battlefield.

His unit assembled and criticized him. Criticizing or punishing a guerrilla who had lost his rifle happened occasionally in the units of the revolutionary army. The guerrilla thought he deserved the criticism of his comrades-in-arms, and made up his mind not to repeat such a mistake. Then, a senior political cadre suggested that a severe penalty be given him, making the atmosphere of the meeting threatening.

Finding out that the guerrilla was a new recruit, Kim Chaek concluded that his officers were responsible for not training him properly and that the recruit should be given assistance, not a penalty. He dismissed the suggestion of the senior political cadre.

Had the issue finished there, everything would have been all right. But, as the political worker insisted that the man be executed, the new recruit fled in the night. Thus, a problem that could have been settled without a hitch developed in an unforeseen direction. The political officer became an object of hatred. All denounced him as an inhumane man. Some condemned him as a counterrevolutionary and others urged that he be punished.

Receiving a report about this, Kim Chaek said that he and none other was responsible for it, and it was a fault in his own work, the work of the chief political officer, that there was a political officer who did not treasure the political integrity of his men. That day he enrolled the political officer in his guard unit, and took him with him to give him individual education.

At every opportunity Kim Chaek stressed to his officers and men the need

to establish a good relationship between the army and the people and between superiors and subordinates.

He spoke highly of my holding aloft, though in a foreign land, the banner of the Korean revolution, relating it to the spirit of independence. He told his Korean guerrillas that though they were fighting in a Chinese unit, they should bear in mind the Korean revolution at all times, that the revolution must be carried out by Koreans, not by others, and that they should always remember their motherland.

Kim Chaek and I had many things in common–from the aspect of the revolution, the approach to the people, the stand on the spirit of independence, to the issue of the method and style of work, not to mention the issue of building the Party, the state and the army.

To Kim Chaek, who was surprised to find that I knew every detail of his life, I said I also had long observed his progress.

Smiling, he said, "If men who have neither seen nor met each other pay attention to and miss each other, then it is a predestined relationship."

I agreed.

As it was in the summer of 1930 that he had gone to Jilin to see me, our friendship may be said to have started thereafter.

In consideration of his age and the course of his revolutionary struggle, Kim Chaek, ranking high in the north Manchurian unit, could be called a senior among the Korean military and political cadres of the guerrilla army from Manchuria.

As for me, I was not yet the Head of State nor the General Secretary of the Party.

For all this, Kim Chaek gave prominence to me as the representative and leader of the Korean revolution in front of the Soviet and Chinese people.

Why did he so absolutely trust and give prominence to me, a man nine years his junior? This can be explained in various ways. His heart was full of the idea that there should be a centre of leadership for the revolution, and all should be firmly rallied as one around the centre. His yearning for and missing of the centre were expressed finally in his special concern and affection for me.

After he met me, he became one of my closest comrades, and followed and helped me consistently. Regardless of changes in circumstances, he entrusted himself wholely to me and worked faithfully.

Returning to the motherland after its liberation, he never relaxed for a single day, as he was constantly on the move to build the Party, the state, the armed forces and industry.

It was the same during the Korean war. In those days he went wherever he was wanted. When he was the Front Commander he went as far as Chungchong Province. He was in the frontline area, but when I went to the front to inspect it, he rebuked my aides, saying, "How could you bring the Comrade Supreme Commander here of all places?"

The people who accompanied me to Suanbo were scolded sharply by Kim Chaek at that time.

While young communists of the new generation upheld me as the centre of leadership in the days in Jilin, in the 1930s and in the first half of the 1940s, Kim Chaek and other anti-Japanese revolutionary fighters put me at the centre of unity and cohesion, and strove to carry out the Juche-orientated line of the Korean revolution. In this way the centre of leadership was formed in our revolution. In this undertaking Kim Chaek rendered distinguished service. This is precisely the contribution he made to the communist movement and to the history of the national liberation struggle in our country.

At the training base in the Soviet Far East region in those days were guerrillas who had fought in northern Manchuria as well as in southern Manchuria. There were also Koreans who had grown up there. Had each of them given pride of place to his unit and stubbornly stuck to his own opinion, the revolutionary ranks could not have been united, and the centre would not have been formed. But nothing like provincialism or scrambling for hegemony took place among the Korean communists at the training base. And such things could not take place, as they were all pure-hearted. Moreover, such veterans as Kim Chaek and Choe Yong Gon gave prominence to me from the outset, confirming the centre of leadership.

I will give you an example that shows how Kim Chaek followed and trusted me.

After participating in the Khabarovsk conference Kim Chaek spent most of 1942 and 1943 in Manchuria. He went there in order to guide the small units fighting in northern Manchuria. He did not come back to the base even after he finished his work. By that time, Ho Hyong Sik and Pak Kil Song, commanders of the units in northern Manchuria, had died in action, and Kim Chaek was loath to leave the land soaked with the blood of his comrades-in-arms. When the IAF were organized, its Headquarters wired him several times to withdraw, but each time he replied that he would only return after finishing his work. His small unit was carrying a wireless set at that time. And each time they received his reply, the commanding personnel of the IAF were displeased with his conduct.

I sent a telegram to him in my name, judging that he was not well aware of the fact that we had formed the IAF in view of the changed situation, and were expediting the final victory of the anti-Japanese revolution.

He returned to the base only after receiving my telegram. Why did he come back as soon as he received my message, a man who had remained unmoved even by the order of the IAF Headquarters? It was because he followed and trusted me so much. He regarded my words and requests as absolute, thinking that it was proper for him to return when I ordered him to do so, and without any conditions.

From the days at the base in the Far East region he not only gave prominence to me, he sincerely protected me.

When I was leaving with a small unit in the spring of 1941 he showed concern for each man of the company which was to guard me.

When we were making preparations for the final operations against the Japanese troops, he called a meeting of Korean commanders in the IAF without giving me notice. The meeting discussed the issue of ensuring my personal safety. He told the meeting: "Everyone must ensure the personal safety of Comrade Kim Il Sung with a high sense of vigilance. Comrade Kim Il Sung is the leader representing the people and

revolutionaries of Korea, so we must defend him at the risk of our lives."

After the triumphal return of the soldiers of the KPRA to their motherland, he called another meeting on guarding me.

"Returning to the motherland," he said at this time, "we can see that the situation is more complicated than we heard. The manoeuvrings of terrorists are quite threatening. We must be on the highest alert, or else I'm not sure what might happen. The chief secretary of the South Phyongan Provincial Party Committee, Hyon Jun Hyok, was assassinated by terrorists. You must never allow the news of General Kim Il Sung's triumphal return to escape your lips. The time will come when the news will be made public, so until then you must keep it a secret. We must ensure General Kim's safety particularly well, as we are his personal bodyguards."

Later he took the initiative of organizing my Guard Unit.

If I were to recount all the details of how faithful he was to me, it would take more than a day.

As I still do today, I channelled great efforts into working with the people after liberation. I really had a busy time working with the people, the revolutionaries from south Korea and with foreigners at that time. Nosaka Sanjo went to Japan via our country.

Though we had distinguished guests, we had no system of entertaining them. We had not even a guest house where we could provide them with board and lodging. Most of them were accommodated in my house, where only boiled rice and soup were served. Everyone regarded this as normal, as it could not be helped just after liberation. But Kim Chaek showed considerable concern over it. He worried about the fact that not even good liquor was available in my house.

It is true that the country is in a pitiful state and we have no money. But how can we go to the market to buy liquor each time a guest visits the General? When the Republic is founded, guests will come to see the General in droves. We have to build a distillery with our own hands and make liquor for entertainment purposes. Besides, for the safety of the General we should make it ourselves–this was what Kim Chaek thought.

Without my knowledge, he began to inquire into which liquor was the most famous across the country and who was its distiller. The liquor made in Ryonggang was said to be the best soon after liberation. A distiller and his daughter made it, and senior Japanese and well-to-do people enjoyed drinking it before liberation. Kim Chaek went to Ryonggang to meet them. Moved by his words, the distiller asked Kim Chaek to take his daughter with him if a specialist in making liquor was needed by the country. She was Kang Jong Suk. After that, Kang Jong Suk cooked meals for Kim Chaek and made liquor in her spare time. When she laid out a place for distilling, Kim Chaek went to the market with another man and bought rice. Soon his house became a distillery.

After several days Kim Chaek came to me with the first bottle of the new liquor.

Filling a glass to the brim, he said, "This is the first Ryonggang liquor Kang Jong Suk has made for you."

Kim Chaek was delighted when I praised the taste.

From then on, the Ryonggang liquor Kang Jong Suk made was served at state banquets, and as another happy ending to this episode, Kim Chaek and Kang Jong Suk became man and wife.

To what degree he considered his leader's authority absolute can also be known from the fact that whenever I called him over the phone, he stood up, adjusted his dress and buttoned up his jacket before speaking on the phone. When he was ill in bed, he would still rise to his feet to receive a call from me, whether there was anybody nearby or not. A man who does not respect his leader from the bottom of his heart cannot do as he did.

He thought he could not exist without me.

The severest of times during the Fatherland Liberation War were the days of retreat. Though it was announced that it was a temporary and strategic retreat, some timorous people even thought the Republic was coming to an end. When the enemy advanced to Sariwon, Kim Chaek, the Front Commander, built a line for defending Pyongyang covering the areas of Junghwa, Sangwon and Kangdong. Reporting on the situation at the front to

me, he said that he would reinforce the defences with the retreating units and defend the frontline to the last, requesting that I leave Pyongyang with the staff of the Supreme Headquarters. A few days later he again phoned me to ask me to move the Supreme Headquarters to another place. I answered that he should also retreat before the enemy attacked.

But instead of retreating he sent me his Party membership card. Apparently he was resolved to fight a do-or-die battle.

I called him on the phone, and said I would not leave Pyongyang unless he retreated. Only then did he come to Pyongyang with the defence units. He took back his Party membership card when the Korean People's Army began the counteroffensive.

Some people said he was a very stern, truculent man. But, frankly speaking, he acted severely only in front of idlers, sycophants, the discontented, the selfish, careerists and factionalists; he was boundlessly kind-hearted and modest in front of his subordinates and the people. As he so hated those who played a double game, Pak Hon Yong was mindful of his behaviour in front of Kim Chaek. Kim Tu Bong, though himself Chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme People's Assembly, avoided encountering him.

Kim Chaek was completely free from affectation and hypocrisy.

Immediately after liberation, his son, who had been wandering in Manchuria, was reunited with him. The young man was wearing shabby clothes and straw sandals. Nevertheless, Kim Chaek wanted to introduce him to me without first dressing him up in new clothes and shoes, as other parents would have done.

He said to his son: "Don't feel ashamed of your straw sandals. You seem not to know what kind of man General Kim Il Sung is. Don't worry. You have so far lived barefooted, and you can't imitate a wealthy son all of a sudden. The General will be happier to see you in straw sandals and those clothes. If you were in a Western suit and leather shoes, he would not be happy."

When he appeared in my office with his son in straw sandals, the son he had met after 16 years of separation, I could not hold back tears. That day I

shed more tears than Kim Chaek did. How copiously he must have shed tears in his mind!

But his family reunion lasted only for four years.

Kim Chaek died because he overtaxed himself. He carried too large a burden.

It was on January 30, 1951 that I saw him last. At the time the Supreme Headquarters was in Konji-ri. That evening he came to me without prior notice. He said that the 24$^{th}$ of the previous month had been Comrade Kim Jong Suk's birthday but he had failed to come to see me because he had been busy, although he knew I would feel lonely. He apologized, continuing that the end of this month was approaching and he had come now as the more he had thought the more he had felt he had been remiss and he could not stand it any longer.

I said to him: "In December last year we were in quite a hurry to drive out the Americans from the north of Korea. We didn't have time to visit each other, did we? Please don't worry about it."

That day he was not like himself. I did not know why, but he was strangely sentimental.

He asked me to take a stroll, so I went outside with him. He told me that he did not know before the war that there was such a scenic place there, and we should build an excellent rest house there after the war. I agreed. To be candid, we had been so busy after liberation building a new country that we failed to inquire into where valleys suitable for building rest houses and scenic places were situated. As for our own recreation, all we could do was go to the Maekjon Ferry or the Jangsuwon Bridge and wash our feet before returning.

I still remember Kim Chaek trying to hide from my eyes his socks ripped open at the heels.

I gave him a pair of my socks, saying, "Don't overtax yourself with work. Take care of yourself. How can you stand the winter cold wearing torn socks? Please take care of yourself for my sake."

That evening he wanted to dine with me. But Ho Ka I unexpectedly

appeared to report about Party work. He took a great deal of time over this report, without coming straight to the point. So Kim Chaek left Konji-ri without taking a meal.

Leaving the Supreme Headquarters, he said to me: “We will be victorious over the Americans, General. Please don’t work too hard, and look after your health.”

This was the last request he made to me. The request moved my heart in a special way on that day.

That day Kim Chaek burned the midnight oil in his office before dying of heart failure.

When the Minister of Public Health and Director of the Medical Bureau, Ri Pyong Nam, reported the news, I could not believe it. I could not believe that a man, who had talked with me just a few hours before, had died so suddenly. Disregarding my bodyguards’ dissuasion, I went by car during the daylight hours, despite the danger from enemy bombers, to the place where the Cabinet was situated. Only there did I realize that Ri Pyong Nam had told the truth.

I regretted having failed to make Kim Chaek stay with me the previous night. Had he done so, he would not have worked late into the night and he would not have had a heart attack.

Another thing I regretted was that on the evening when he called on me I saw him off without having a meal with him. Even if I had had a meal with him that evening, my grief would not have been relieved, and it still weighs on my heart.

I cannot remember most of the things that happened on the day when I bade him my last farewell. The only thing I remember clearly is touching his hands for the last time before the departure of the hearse, the hands I had shaken for the first time in Khabarovsk 10 years before. I had not forgotten the warmth of his hands at that time, but on the day of the funeral they were icy cold, the hands of Kim Chaek who would rush to me before any one else and clasp my hands whenever I returned from a field tour!

Kim Chaek lived all his life as my faithful comrade-in-arms. That is all

the more reason why I cannot forget him. After his death, I looked after his sons as he would have done. I sent them abroad for study and arranged marriages for them. When his granddaughter was born, I congratulated them on her birth. I often invited them to my house and dined with them. Nonetheless, I could find no relief from sorrow, as I felt I had failed to do enough for them for Kim Chaek's sake.

Whenever our revolution encounters trials and difficulties, I yearn for Kim Chaek.

As I said before, I did not go to his grave by car. Whenever I went to his grave, I felt guilty about riding in a car, so I got off at the foot of Mt. Taesong and walked up to his grave.

Even if he is now in the world beyond, how can my love and respect for him change?

I have experienced a lot while waging the revolution, and what I cherish most deeply is the experience of comrades.

For a person who has embarked on the road of revolution with a determination to dedicate his life to the freedom and liberation of his fellows, the most precious things are comrades and *camaraderie* . A faithful comrade can be said to be one's alter ego. I do not betray myself. If faithful and obliging comrades unite, they can prevail against Heaven itself. This is why I always say if one gains comrades, he can win the world, and if one is forsaken by one's comrades, one will lose the world. The word "comrade" means a like-minded man. The mind is inseparable from ideology. The relationship between comrades formed through temporary interests or mental calculation cannot be solid; it breaks up easily, depending on the circumstances. But the relationship of comrades based on ideology and will is eternal; even bullets or the gallows cannot break it.

The Korean revolution has produced many comrades who showed noble examples of fidelity. They constitute a galaxy around us.

After Kim Chaek's death, we named Songjin, a city near his home village, the Chongjin Iron Works, an enterprise associated with his devoted life, and Pyongyang University of Technology after him–namely, Kimchaek

City, Kim Chaek Iron Works and Kim Chaek University of Technology. A military academy was also named after him. A statue to him stands in Kimchaek City.

I hope that the city, the enterprise and the university named after him will always take the lead in socialist construction.

Kim Chaek hated following in the wake of others. He always stood in the van. He performed significant things in the building of our industry. When I see factories and enterprises that fail to manage themselves efficiently, I say to myself, “If Kim Chaek knew this. ... If Kim Chaek knew this. ...”

In the days when Kim Chaek was Minister of Industry, the industry of our country operated smoothly. Some of our officials who are still active once worked with him. I hope they will not make his service to the building of our industry come to naught.

# 3. Greeting the Spring in a Foreign Land

Visitors to the Korean Revolution Museum find themselves attracted to a photograph, which bears an inscription by the great leader Comrade Kim Il Sung: “Greeting the spring in a foreign land.”

On a visit to the museum, he stopped in front of the photo and said that he valued it the most.

When he recollected the anti-Japanese revolution, he often spoke about his memories of Comrade Kim Jong Suk. She was cherished in the great leader’s heart as his dearest comrade, a never-to-be-forgotten comrade-in-arms.

I posed for this photo when I was in Camp South. It was a temporary base near the town of Voroshilov for the units of the KPRA and the 1st Route Army of the NAJAA in their early days in the Soviet Union. It was also called Camp B.

We spent a winter there and, then moved into Manchuria and the homeland for small-unit actions. In the summer of 1942 we settled down in Camp North after forming the IAF along with the NAJAA and units of the Soviet army to cope with the rapidly-changing situation in which the Soviet-German War and the Pacific War had broken out.

Camp North was located near Khabarovsk. It was also called Camp A by the anti-Japanese fighters.

After the Khabarovsk conference I went to Camp South.

Choe Hyon, who had arrived there earlier, came out a long way to receive us. He looked wide-eyed at me, as I was wearing a fur cap and fur overcoat. He burst out laughing, saying, “I was wondering who this gentleman was, and it turns out to be you, General Kim.”

I still remember that occasion. He hugged me so tightly, I felt like

choking. He said jokingly that he had heard that I was in a conference at Khabarovsk, and asked why the meeting had taken so long.

A short way from Camp South to the east there was a small railway station on the line between Khabarovsk and Vladivostok.

The soldiers of the KPRA assembled in the camp built more barracks, houses, stores, kitchens and ablutions. The barracks were of the dug-out type, with bunk beds like those in the present barracks of the Korean People's Army. My men worked hard to construct them. They laid out a wide sports ground in front of the barracks.

In Camp South we studied political affairs a lot, while making preparations for small-unit actions in the homeland and Manchuria. In those days most of my men saw films for the first time in their lives.

There we had no need to worry about food supplies. We were each served with about 200 grammes of sliced bread at every meal. At first, the meals were not to our taste, as we were not accustomed to Western food and the side dishes were not very good.

There was a truck in the camp which brought supplies to us from a nearby farm. Its driver was a Russian. Ri O Song followed him like a shadow to learn how to drive. Sometimes he followed him to the farm. In the course of this, he learned how to drive, and also how to drink. Apparently the driver was very fond of drinking. With this experience, Ri O Song worked as a driver for some time after liberation. He was mad about driving. But one day he ran into a fence while driving my car. After that, he was banned from driving.

Once after liberation the Soviet comrades who had been in Camp South visited our country. The driver was among them and met his old friend, Ri O Song, in Pyongyang.

I will never forget the year when we spent the winter and greeted spring in the Far East region of the Soviet Union.

The year 1941 witnessed a great change in our revolution and great events breaking out all across the world. In June the Nazi army invaded the Soviet Union, and in December the Pacific War broke out with Japan's attack on

Pearl Harbour. Indeed, in 1941 mankind was plunged into innumerable sufferings and calamities. It was a year of misery, a year of conflagration, when human civilization that had been built up for thousands of years was crushed under armour and artillery fire.

Viewed from the spring of that year, however, the Soviet-German War and the Pacific War were still in the future. We greeted 1941 full of optimism and confidence in the future. The time for the Korean revolutionaries to carry out the sacred mission they had assumed for the times and history, for their motherland and nation, was near at hand.

That spring I thought a lot about our small-unit activities and future joint operations, and exchanged opinions with my comrades. At that time Kim Chaek and Zhou Bao-zhong stayed at Camp South for some time, and I frequently consulted them.

After the Khabarovsk conference we decided to form small units and dispatch them to the motherland and Manchuria. I made preparations to leave in command of a small unit.

Pending our departure, Kim Jong Suk helped us in our preparations. By that time she and I were married.

Fighting for the revolution, we had got to know each other, and while sharing life and death on Mt. Paektu, we had become friends, comrades, and life companions.

It was around the time of the Dahuangwai conference that I first saw her. I am not sure whether it was during the meeting or after it, but I went to Sandaowan in Yanji County. The Party secretariat was located in Nengzhiying, Sandaowan. I met her at a meeting of the officials of the secretariat held in Nengzhiying. She was working with the secretariat at that time.

Later, I met her again in Maanshan, as she had been enrolled in my unit. She, along with Kim Myong Hwa, greeted me in Manjiang, and I was very impressed with her appearance. That day I talked a lot with her. Through our conversation I learned that she had no one to rely on except her comrades-in-arms.

From that time on, she fought shoulder to shoulder with us.

In my unit she took part in the Battle of the Fusong County Town, and fully demonstrated her audacity and intelligence.

I should say that I owe my survival in that fierce battle to her. With seven or eight other women soldiers, she was preparing the morning meal on a col not far from the battle site. In the depression was a house in which they could cook, as the smoke from the chimney could not be seen by enemy observers. But the enemy pounced upon the col all of a sudden. If this strategic spot were to be occupied by them, we could be attacked from both sides. Sensing the critical nature of the situation, Kim Jong Suk drew her Mauser and, with the other women soldiers, delivered heavy fire at the enemy, mowed many of them down and beat the rest back.

The battle made her the favourite of her comrades-in-arms.

That year (1936–Tr.) we operated in Changbai. Then in March the next year we set out on an expedition to Fusong. I have often mentioned this arduous expedition. Frankly speaking, everyone, including myself, was tired out. Every night most of the exhausted men fell fast asleep. But Kim Jong Suk would sit up all night by the campfire, mending the torn clothes of her comrades. As they marched through rugged mountains, their clothes were easily torn. Ma Tong Hui, a recruit at that time, had a hole burnt in his cap from a campfire spark. Kim Jong Suk mended it neatly. As I learned later, she made everything tidy with the utmost care. That night I was moved by her kind heart, by the fact that she could not sleep in peace before she had helped others. This fact gave me a deep understanding of the woman.

That was why I readily agreed to the proposal of some commanding officers to assign her to an underground workers' group to be sent to Taoquanli. She did a lot of work in Taoquanli and Sinpha. And it was at this time that I found in her uncommon skill and ability as a revolutionary. She had an unusual ability to motivate the masses, awakening them to consciousness and enlisting them in action. The "testimonial for a good citizen" which hundreds of people in Taoquanli and its vicinity are said to have submitted to the police with their signatures when she was arrested by the Jingan army soldiers showed their affection for her.

How could she enjoy such trust from the people?

Because she had worked with her full devotion. Whatever she did, she threw herself into it heart and soul, unafraid of death. And this was why she could survive any danger.

She was afire with love for the people. She thought her sacrifice for others was not in the least wasteful. It was her nature to go through even fire and water if it was for the sake of her comrades.

In April 1938 we had an encounter at Shuangshanzi on our way back from attacking the enemy in Liudaogou. The battle was so fierce, I myself took a machine-gun on the firing line and mowed down the enemy. As the enemy was closing upon us from all sides, we had no way out, nor even a chance to take a meal.

Then I felt something warm at my side. I felt in my pocket, and found dumplings in it. Glancing round, I could see Kim Jong Suk running about the battlefield, putting dumplings in the hands of the comrades. We continued fighting while eating the dumplings. The food was cooked by a spring at the foot of a cliff. There was no knowing how she had climbed up the perpendicular cliff carrying a pan full of dumplings.

She carried food to her comrades even running about the battlefield like that, lest they should go hungry, but she herself always went hungry.

Once the unit ran out of cereals, and had only potatoes to eat. If a man eats potatoes for several meals in a row, he gets tired of them and loses his appetite. Kim Jong Suk was sorry to see her comrades-in-arms with nothing but potatoes to eat for several days, and racked her brains about how to stimulate their appetites. She ground up potatoes and cooked pancakes out of them, or made cakes out of them stuffed with stewed edible herbs. From that time on, her comrades ate the potatoes with relish.

Kim Jong Suk lived all her life not for herself, but for her comrades. Her life started with love for her comrades, and developed on the basis of that feeling. In the course of this, she became a prominent revolutionary who displayed communist moral qualities to the fullest extent. All that she did throughout her life was for her comrades, her fellows and for the revolution.

She did nothing for her own benefit. She never thought of herself at all.

"I can endure hunger, cold and pain. I am satisfied if my comrades do not feel hunger, cold or pain. If I can save my comrades from danger at the cost of my own life, I will face death with a smile, with no regrets."–This was her outlook on life.

The story about a blanket is sufficient to illustrate how sincere and ardent her love for her comrades was.

Some time ago, So Sun Ok, one of her comrades-in-arms, came to Pyongyang from Yanji, China, to see me. She brought with her a blanket and a pair of binoculars. She had been a cook for the Headquarters of the main force of the KPRA. Her husband, Kim Myong Ju, had also fought in the main force as an officer for some time. He had been widely known for his nickname "Yanji prison". He had been in the 7th Regiment when we were operating in the Fusong area.

Choe Hui Suk, on her way back from underground work in Yaofangzi, brought with her So Sun Ok. So Sun Ok, only 15 or 16 years old at that time, joined the KPRA. Choe also took with her So's nephew. The recruit whom Om Kwang Ho branded as an enemy spy in the Qingfeng secret camp was this very nephew.

Kim Jong Suk loved So Sun Ok dearly. When camping, she would sleep with So Sun Ok, some years junior to her, under the same blanket. Kim Jong Suk and So Sun Ok were the only women guerrillas near Headquarters.

The blanket So Sun Ok brought with her to Pyongyang was the very blanket Kim Jong Suk had used with much affection. The blanket had always been on her knapsack. When it was difficult to recognize her because she was hidden by her large knapsack, I could tell who it was by the sight of the blanket. When So Sun Ok was leaving for a base for small-unit actions, Kim Jong Suk gave her the blanket as a memento. At the base were Kim Myong Ju and Hyon Chol. She must have married Kim Myong Ju at the camp.

On the day of her leave-taking So Sun Ok hugged Kim Jong Suk and wept without ceasing. Her departure was full of tears as the two women had

slept under the same blanket. Kim Jong Suk was worried at that time over what to give her as a memento. Putting the blanket in her knapsack, Kim Jong Suk said, “Well, please take this as a memento. It’s not a new one, but don’t forget that it carries my warmth, the warmth of your elder sister, who has loved you so much.”

The blanket came to me after half a century. Despite the passage of time, I could recognize the favourite blanket of Kim Jong Suk. The pair of binoculars was the one I had given to Kim Myong Ju.

Had she had a thing dearer to her than the blanket, Kim Jong Suk would have given it to So Sun Ok without hesitation. She always said she was happier to give than to receive. It was her philosophy of life that she was much happier giving her tender feelings to others than receiving others’ tender feelings, although the latter was also good.

Her love for her comrades found a most distinct expression in her efforts to help me, with unstinted devotion. Loyalty to one’s commander is in essence an expression of one’s love for one’s comrades.

One year we fought many battles in which we had to skip meals, as we had run out of food supplies. When I was commanding a battle someone put something in my pocket. I turned to find that it was Kim Jong Suk. After the battle I looked in my pocket. There were cracked pine nuts wrapped in paper. I asked her where she had got them. She only smiled. Later, the women soldiers told me that she had climbed pine trees to pick the cones.

She snatched me from the jaws of death on several occasions. She was always prepared to become a shield herself to protect me from enemy fire.

During the battle on the outskirts of Dashahe, a critical situation arose around me. A group of enemy troops were approaching me stealthily, yet I was not aware of the situation for I was commanding the battle. But for Kim Jong Suk’s help, I would have been killed. She shielded me with her own body and shot all the enemy soldiers. So I was saved miraculously. Similar things happened on several occasions.

The padded coat I wore in the mountains for several years was also made

by her. Apparently she had heard somewhere that floss-silk was bullet-proof. So she gathered floss whenever it was available and made a padded coat for me. As the coat she had made, stitch after stitch with the utmost care, sitting up late for several nights, fitted me perfectly, she was overjoyed.

When I sat up all night or went to sleep at bivouacs, I would spread on the ground the deer skin I was carrying with me and lie on it, covering my body with the padded coat. Then I would feel warm enough.

Nowadays, women do not do much knitting, I was told. They do not take the trouble, because machines do the job nowadays. Whenever I see knitwear, I am reminded of Kim Jong Suk. She did a lot of knitting for me. I wondered how she could manage to find time from her cooking duties to knit, and where she obtained knitting wool. Anyhow she read books or did knitting whenever she had time.

It was not easy to obtain knitting wool in the mountains. In those days we had to fight a battle just to obtain a packet of needles. Nevertheless, Kim Jong Suk made padded overcoats and waistbands, because she worried about my health, as I had to eat, sleep and march in the open in all seasons, fighting the enemy. She knitted woolen stockings for me every year until the country's liberation.

I was sorry she took so much trouble for me, and I once asked her where and how she obtained knitting wool. She only smiled. I asked her again if she had woolen stockings of her own. She again did not answer. As I pressed her for an answer, she only said, "You are engaged in a great work, General, and you needn't worry your head about such trivial things."

After liberation she again did knitting for me. If my socks were worn out, instead of patching them, she would unravel them, wind the yarn on a spool and knit new socks for me. She would work all night and put them by my bed in the morning. She could of course buy socks better than those in shops and markets, but she did not buy new ones. If a pair of new socks she had bought was worn out, she would unravel them and knit them again for me until the yarn wore out. She wanted to knit my socks herself. That was truly a womanly heart.

I once could not help becoming annoyed at her exceptional devotion to me. It was one winter–I cannot remember which year it was–when she gave me my clothes she had washed and then dried against her own body. She had tried to do it unnoticed by others, but the other women soldiers' high praise for her deed reached my ears.

Dumbfounded at this unheard-of episode, I called her to Headquarters. I was near tears when I saw her face so pale from the cold. To think that she had done for me what my mother dared not do in her lifetime, I did not know what to say to her.

The devotion with which Kim Jong Suk undertook of her own accord the thing even my mother had not done, to sacrifice herself! I thought it must have been her warm feeling towards the man Kim Il Sung, as well as her revolutionary devotion to her Commander.

"Comrade Jong Suk, I respect your devotion to me," I said to her. "I am always grateful to you for it. But why on earth did you do this? What if you catch pneumonia? If I bask in your self-sacrificing devotion, do you think I will feel at ease? Don't do it again."

Smiling, she said, "It is nothing at all if only I can see you, General, in good health. ..."

Though I was angry in front of her, I shed tears after sending her back. I don't know why, but I was reminded of my mother at that time. I felt as if Kim Jong Suk's kindness for me contained that portion of love my mother could not give me in her lifetime.

I can never forget the look of Kim Jong Suk trying, biting her lips, not to reveal the chill she was feeling as she had been deprived of the warmth of her body by the wet clothes.

In the subsequent years, too, she would dry my clothes with her body. All in all, she protected me from bullets, rain and snow, and from fits of cold with her body.

Our contemporary historians call the road of anti-Japanese revolution we trod an unprecedented path. They are right. The anti-Japanese revolutionary veterans blazed a trail not only in the revolution but in love. Their life was

trying beyond imagination, but love blossomed on the hard rocks of Mt. Paektu.

I believe that an important thing in human love–love between parents and their children, love between husband and wife, love between sweethearts, love between teacher and his pupils, and love between comrades–is the spirit of devotion. Throwing oneself into fire, facing the gallows or jumping into a hole in the ice if necessary in order to relieve the person one loves of hunger, pain and cold, even though one feels hungry, cold and painful oneself–only this self-sacrificing spirit of devotion can create the most beautiful, ennobling and sincere love.

When I visited Mangyongdae on my return to the motherland after liberation, my family and relatives said that they had heard that I had married a good woman when fighting in the mountains. They asked where we had had the wedding ceremony, how it had been arranged, who had been the best man and who had provided the wedding feast.

I could not answer. I was suddenly choked, and found myself at a loss for words to answer these questions. Telling the truth would grieve my grandparents and make my kinsfolk feel sorry for me.

When we were fighting in the mountains, we could not afford to think of things like wedding feasts. Life was arduous and trying, and, worse still, we had not won back the country and were ashamed of being a ruined nation. So how could we think of things like wedding ceremonies or birthday parties? None of us wished for such extravagance.

A wedding ceremony in the guerrilla army was very simple. All that had to be done was just to announce that such and such comrades were married. We could never imagine such a ceremony as giving a party in wedding gowns as the young men and women do now. When we enjoyed fairly good conditions, a bowl of cooked rice was all that was served. If rice was not available, gruel was served, and, if even gruel could not be served, potato or maize was shared. For all that, no one complained. On the contrary, we took it for granted and regarded it as natural.

After the announcement of the wedding we went on with our usual life in

the companies and platoons we belonged to. There was no exception even for commanding officers. Some couples went into battle immediately after their weddings and fell in action, and other couples lived apart, as they were given different missions.

On the day I married Kim Jong Suk, our comrades-in-arms tried to obtain something special for us, but to no avail. Where could they obtain anything when the whole unit had run out of food supplies and were going hungry?

There was no wedding dress, no wedding cake, no master of ceremonies and no best man, but I will never forget that event. Kim Jong Suk, too, often recalled the day.

If they hear this, younger people may wonder how it could be so. But it could not be otherwise in the circumstances of those days.

The anti-Japanese guerrillas felt the worth of life in gladly accepting and enduring today's hardships for the sake of tomorrow's happiness. That was their joy of life. They lived in that way for the coming generation, for their motherland as we see it today.

In the days in the Paektusan secret camp and the training base in the Soviet Far East region, I thought of arranging proper wedding ceremonies for my comrades-in-arms after the liberation of the country. But I found that I could not do as I had wished because, though the country was liberated, the people were not well-off and the food problem was acute.

One day immediately after liberation Jang Si U called on me and protested that a veteran guerrilla intended to spend money belonging to the Party committee of South Phyongan Province on a man's wedding. When I asked him who the veteran was, he said it was Kim Song Guk.

I called Kim Song Guk to my office and ordered Ri Ul Sol to disarm him. I then reprimanded him, asking who had authorized him to meddle with the finances of the provincial Party committee.

Almost in tears, he said, "I wanted to prepare a wedding suit, quilts and a party for Son Jong Jun. As he has no relatives, what can he do if we do not help him?"

Nevertheless, I criticized him severely.

"I know full well that it would be nice to prepare these things for Son's wedding. But are we in a position to do so? If you had recalled even once the days when we held weddings without proper food, you would not have asked the Party for money. The country is in dire circumstances, so observe with care and be prudent in your behaviour, as befits a veteran guerrilla."

Though I reprimanded him, I felt my heart ache. Frankly speaking, how laudable it was for Kim Song Guk to try to arrange a proper wedding ceremony for a comrade with whom he had shared weal and woe, joy and sorrow!

Many of the veteran guerrillas got married in the liberated motherland, but they all held their weddings in a simple way. This always weighed on my heart. This is why Comrade Kim Jong Il arranges parties for their $60^{th}$ and $70^{th}$ birthdays, and sends gifts to them.

Kim Jong Suk, however, did not enjoy such things and passed away in her early 30s, leaving behind her this photo. It was by mere chance that she and I posed for it. But for the care of our revolutionary comrades-in-arms, she would not have been able to leave behind even this photo.

When I was making preparations to leave in command of a small unit, my comrades called on me one day and suggested having photos taken. They said that as there was no knowing when we would meet again, we should leave photos as souvenirs. They added that all that I needed to do was to pose, because they had borrowed a camera.

Going outside in my uniform, I found Choe Hyon waiting for me. It was still chilly, but spring air could be distinctly felt everywhere.

Leaning on a tree on which spring tints were emerging, I posed with my comrades-in-arms for photo, as souvenir of our meeting in Camp South after a long separation as well as on the occasion of departing on small-unit actions.

Others posed in groups of twos or threes.

At that time, some women guerrillas, getting wind of our photography session, ran to me and said they also would like to get their photos taken. So I posed for a few photos with them. They then suggested to me that I should

have a photo taken with Kim Jong Suk. Hearing this, she grew shy and hid herself behind the backs of the women guerrillas. They pushed her forward to my side, smiling all the way. In order not to miss the moment, a comrade clicked the shutter.

That was probably the first time in my life that I had posed with a woman comrade individually. For Kim Jong Suk and me, it was as good as a wedding photo.

In those days we were still young and vivacious. We had many dreams of a bright future. Though we greeted the spring in a foreign land, we were full of confidence and in high spirits.

For both of us, it was an unforgettable first spring that we greeted after our wedding.

As I wanted to remember that spring forever, I jotted down on the back of the photo: "Greeting the spring in a foreign land, March 1, 1941. At Camp B."

I never imagined that this photo would remain in history to be displayed in such a large museum as the Korean Revolution Museum. We fought for the anti-Japanese revolution for 20 years, and it is regrettable that not many photos of this period remain. So, I am grateful to those comrades who suggested photo-taking to me.

Kim Jong Suk wore her hair bobbed, like the other women guerrillas did . But you cannot see her hair style in this photo, for all her hair is covered by her cap. There was a reason for this.

That spring I went to Manchuria and the homeland with a small unit. As I was passing Hunchun across the Soviet-Manchurian border, I felt my feet growing warm. At first I took no notice, thinking that it was the result of the long march. But at each step I felt something warm and soft on my soles. So I pulled off my shoes, to find in them liners made with hair. Only then did I remember that Kim Jong Suk had been wearing her cap even indoors, and I realized that she had cut her hair to make the liners. She must have worn her cap because she was too shy to show her short hair.

Those who posed for the photos with me that day are now all gone–An

Kil, Choe Hyon, Kim Jong Suk. There were many of them, but they have gone, leaving me behind.

The young tree which An Kil, Choe Hyon and I leaned against to pose for a photo must have become a giant tree by now.

I don't know how Camp South has changed. I should like to take time off to visit it some day.

Even after liberation, Kim Jong Suk attended me with all her heart.

How meticulous she was in taking care of me! She would change my collars once every few days. She starched them and smoothed them by pounding them with a club. This was because only pounded collars became soft and did not feel stiff to the neck. If starched collars are ironed, they become stiff, injuring the skin of the nape and restraining the free movement of the neck. She would pound the collars with a club only when I was not around. She did not do it even once when I was at home, lest it disturb my thinking.

I will tell you one more anecdote related with her faithfulness.

On the eve of national liberation I went to Moscow to participate in a meeting to discuss the campaign against Japan. One night, sleeping in a guest house, I had a dream: Kim Jong Suk carried armfuls of books into a spacious room and told me to read them as I liked, adding that I would not be able to read them all in my lifetime. I awoke from the dream and told my comrades about it. They interpreted it as meaning that I would be President. Interpreting the dream in this grand way, joking, for some minutes, they said I would be very lucky in the future, and congratulated me.

On my return from Moscow I told Kim Jong Suk about the dream. Smiling, she said it was a good omen.

As the months passed, the memory of the dream grew dim.

However, Kim Jong Suk did not forget it. When we were living in a house at the foot of Mt. Haebang after the liberation of the country, she filled the shelves of my study with books and asked me to read them to my heart's content now that the country had been liberated. At her request, she and I posed for a souvenir photograph. The photo still exists.

It may be said that Kim Jong Suk devoted all her life to me. Even after

marrying me, she considered me as Commander, Premier and as the foremost leader. The relationship between her and me was that between the leader and the led, between comrades. She always said she was a soldier of the leader. She never addressed me in familiar terms; she only said “General” or “Comrade Premier”.

One day after liberation, some women journalists called on her to introduce her to the public.

She only said to them: “A fighter’s life is enshrined in the history of his leader. Please write more about General Kim Il Sung.”

I think one can detect her exceptional personality in these words.

She passed away after experiencing nothing but hardships all her life. I felt so heartbroken at this, I strapped a watch to her wrist when bidding my last farewell to her. Could I repay her lifelong devotion to me with a watch? Or could I assuage the grief of losing her by such an action? Nonetheless, I would not have thought of doing it had the watch been an ordinary one with no story to it. It was a watch which had endured remarkable events.

One year my grandmother said to me that she needed a ladies’ watch and asked me if I could buy her a good one even though it was expensive.

I was puzzled at my grandmother, who had lived all her life without even a wall clock, all of a sudden wanting a ladies’ watch, and a good one at that.

I bought such a watch, and took it to my grandmother. I asked her what she needed it for.

“I heard,” she said, “that you got married in the mountains without any fine presents or a feast. This weighs heavily on my heart. A long time has passed since you returned from the mountains, but I haven’t arranged a party for you nor have I had clothes made for you. So I want to have Jong Suk wear a watch. I would be happy if she wore a watch.”

The watch Kim Jong Suk took with her when departing this world was the very same one.

My grandmother’s affection for her grandson’s wife was really deep. This affection also represented that of my father and mother, who had died long before.

However, I did nothing for her. She had arranged a birthday party for me, though simple, every year, but while living with her for nearly ten years after our marriage, I had not arranged one for her. She had not even allowed me to mention her birthday.

As I felt sorry about having done nothing for her, I offered her a glass of wine when I dropped in at my old house for lunch on the day the Republic was founded, saying, “All these years you have taken so much trouble to look after me, but so far I have done nothing for you; I have only given you trouble. Today I wish to offer you a glass of wine.”

She said, “What do you mean by saying that you have done nothing for me? You gave me wonderful presents by founding the Party, the armed forces and the Republic! You have made my lifelong wishes come true. I have nothing more to wish for.”

In the year after Kim Jong Suk’s death, women veterans collected money and presented it to the Party, asking that her grave be renovated. When the project started, I visited her grave on Moran Hill, and found that a steel fence, stone facing and granite steps were being built.

I said to the women veterans working at the construction site: “Please don’t take offence, but look at those houses over there. People are still living in those small houses. They lived shedding bitter tears in the past, suffering hardships, but they are not yet leading decent lives. We have not yet reunified the country. If Jong Suk knew you were decorating her grave with granite slabs in these circumstances, how sorry she would be for the people! If you really want to pay tribute to her, you can plant trees and flowers around her grave and, when you recollect her, bring your children here to have a rest and look after her grave. This is the way to express your true feelings for her. Stop the project at once, and send those granite slabs to other construction sites.”

Though she dedicated her all to the well-being of her comrades and fellows all her life, she did not leave a single penny or any property for her son and daughter. The money she spent came out of my salary and the house and furniture she used all belonged to the state.

If there is any heritage she left with us, it is that she brought up Comrade Kim Jong Il to be the leader of the future, and presented him to the motherland and the Party. You say I brought him up to be my successor, but in actual fact the foundation was laid by Kim Jong Suk. This is the greatest service she rendered for the revolution.

On her last day she sat Kim Jong Il by her side and told him to support his father loyally and inherit and consummate his cause. This was her last will. Three hours later, she breathed her last.

I still frequently recollect her. She wore *chima* (the traditional Korean skirt) and *jogori* (the traditional Korean jacket for women) for several years. For some reason, however, it is more often in military uniform than civilian attire that she appears in my mind's eye, mostly shivering from cold, as she did when she came to me with my clothes she had dried in her bosom.

It is still heartrending for me to remember how she looked.

# 4. The Days of Small-Unit Actions

At times the publications on the payroll of Japanese imperialism gave wide publicity to the effect that the units of the Anti-Japanese Allied Army had been routed if their commanding personnel fell in action. Even though they knew full well that large forces of the Anti-Japanese Allied Army were putting up resistance as ever, the army and police of Japan and Manchukuo, including the headquarters of the Kwantung Army, too, said that the guerrillas had been wiped out in the early 1940s.

If their claim that the anti-Japanese armed units had been routed and an end had been put to our resistance was true, then why did Nozoe move his headquarters from Jilin to Yanji, the theatre of operations of the KPRA, and mass his troops northeast of Mt. Paektu, the troops that had been enlisted to attacking Yang Jing-yu? And why did he throw into "punitive" actions against the guerrillas not only the forces of the Kwantung Army and the puppet Manchukuo army and police, but also the rabble of the railway guards and Concordia Association?

Even in the days of small-unit actions, we fought continually. While avoiding meaningless clashes, we struck the enemy hard when necessary. Of course, we avoided fighting large battles. We instead channelled great efforts into political work with the masses and reconnoitring. We also sent a great number of small units, groups and political workers to the homeland to make preparations for an all-people resistance.

The sizes of small units and groups were different according to the situations, but usually small units consisted of 10 to dozens of men as well as groups of only several men. They were armed lightly to suit their missions and duties. After their formation, we defined their tasks and their areas of operation. According to the tasks assigned, some small units and groups

conducted mainly political work, some performed military actions and some were engaged in reconnaissance. But the tasks were not immutable. They executed other tasks than their own as well, according to the circumstances. For instance, the reconnaissance groups would sometimes conduct political work or the groups engaged mainly in military actions might do political work and reconnoitring at the same time.

As they were being formed, we directed efforts to building temporary secret bases on which they could rely. The typical ones built after the conference at Xiaohaerbaling were those situated near Daomugou in Yanji County, near Mengshancun in Helong County, Huanggouling in Antu County, and Jiapigou in Wangqing County. A large number of such bases were built in the homeland–from Undok, Sonbong, Musan and Rajin to deep into the peninsula. There were secret camps in which small units could stay, and places where communications could be exchanged, where secret meetings could be held and where supply goods could be stored.

After the conference at Xiaohaerbaling the great leader, in command of some men from the Guards Company, fought a successful battle at a swamp near Huanghuadianzi, Antu County, setting an example for small-unit actions. He recollected the battle as follows:

The battle fought near Huanghuadianzi was the first one after our switchover to small-unit actions after the Xiaohaerbaling conference. After the conference I went to Hanconggou with about a squad of my guards. On our return, we came across the enemy near Huanghuadianzi and fought a battle there. Every scene of the battle still remains vividly in my memory.

The name of Huanghuadianzi, like those of Matanggou and Nanpaizi, has a story attached to it. When we asked the local inhabitants what the name of their locality meant, they gave different answers. Some said that it meant a swamp full of chrysanthemums, others replied that it meant a swamp full of day lilies, and still others said it originated from the love of a boy and a girl. We did not know which interpretation was right.

We had passed through the place several times, and found that there were

not many chrysanthemums or day lilies there. But there was a swamp. The battle was fought in the swamp.

Hwang Sun Hui was one of our company. I had given her the task of conveying the policies discussed and decided at the Xiaohaerbaling conference to Choe Hyon. Though small in build, she was agile and had a lofty sense of responsibility. She knew well where Choe Hyon's unit was.

As dusk was falling, we took a break on the mountainside behind Huanghuadianzi.

I thought about how to pass through the swamp. There was a wide ditch across it and a log bridge across the ditch. Foul water of uncertain depth was flowing along the ditch. If we crossed the log bridge and then a couple of mountains, we could go straight to Daomugou in Yanji County, that we had decided upon as a temporary secret base beforehand.

Nevertheless, over the bridge the enemy could have been lying in ambush. As I was gazing at the far end of the bridge, I spotted, as I had expected, a flashing light on the other side. I wondered if it was a firefly at first, but it was without doubt an enemy flashlight, I decided. We could get to Daomugou only by crossing the log bridge, but we were in a fine fix as the enemy soldiers were entrenched in darkness. The situation could be likened to the Korean proverb that "You will meet your enemy on a narrow bridge."

In the days of armed struggle I was surrounded by the enemy and placed in the jaws of death on several occasions, but I think this was the first time that I felt so hemmed in that I could not find a way out.

If we could not cross the bridge, we would have to make a troublesome detour of several miles. We had to continue our march straight ahead at all costs. As I stood there silently sizing up the circumstances, my men were holding their breath in suspense.

After a while, I decided to dash across the bridge before the enemy could notice us, and gave my men the order to start marching. We all crossed the bridge safely, but as soon as I, bringing up the rear, entered the bushes on the other side of the bridge, enemy machine-gun fire rang out.

I ordered my machine-gunner to return the fire, and diverted the column

to the high road. Jon Mun Sop and Hwang Sun Hui guarded me at the risk of their lives. It was quite a critical moment. One false step and we might fall into the unfathomable marsh, and in the meantime enemy bullets were raining all around us. But we escaped the trap with no casualties. It was really a godsend.

Had we been thrown into confusion by the prevailing situation or failed to make a decision in time, we would not have been able to escape from the enemy's trap, and suffered great losses.

When we were marching towards the high road, I got the report from the scout that the enemy had appeared in front of us. No doubt the main force of the enemy, which had been standing by, had been alerted by the shots at the bridge.

I ordered my men to rush back to the bridge. Firing at the enemy soldiers at the bridge and those on our tail, we slipped away to one side, to a mountain. I then gave an order to take a break.

We took a short rest on the ridge of the mountain. Meanwhile, the enemy forces from the bridge and from the high road fell into an exchange of heavy fire.

The people in Antu told us later that the enemy suffered many casualties in the exchange of fire between themselves. The two enemy contingents accused each other of firing first, and wondered whether they had seen ghosts cross the bridge.

Later we killed many enemy soldiers at Facaitun, Yanji County, and near Wudaoyangcha, Antu County. In the battle fought at Facaitun we employed, unlike at Huanghuadianzi, a combination of raids by three parties and telescoping tactics. In this battle, too, the enemy suffered heavy casualties by shooting at each other.

We fought such battles almost every day. Some days a number of small units pooled their forces to attack a large target. As we fought large battles now and then, with the main emphasis on small-unit actions, the enemy did not realize that the People's Revolutionary Army had switched over from large-unit operations to small-unit actions.

After being informed through Hwang Sun Hui about the policies adopted

at the Xiaohaerbaling conference, Choe Hyon and his men conducted efficient small-unit activities. His unit first attacked the enemy at Guangshengtun and Xiaochengzi in Wangqing County in a large combined force and then dispersed into small units to strike the enemy here and there.

Small units led by O Paek Ryong fought in Yanji, Helong and Antu; those led by Kim Il and Sun Chang-xiang in Hunchun and Dongning; and those led by Han In Hwa, Pak Song Chol and Yun Thae Hong in Dongning, Ningan, Muling and Wuchang.

The whole region of Northeast China and the northern border area of Korea seethed with the activities of the small units and groups.

On the small-unit actions he personally commanded after the Khabarovsk conference, the great leader Comrade Kim Il Sung recollected as follows:

In the days before the conference, the small units and groups operated mainly in the northern border area of Korea and Northeast China. After the conference, they made their way into the depths of Korea, expanding their activities as far as the points of military importance on the southern tip of Korea and even in Japan proper.

The contents of their activities were varied. They built Party organizations and underground revolutionary organizations or rebuilt those that had been destroyed in the homeland and Northeast China, put in order or reformed the remaining armed units, and set up a systematic and unified leadership over the organizations for an all-people resistance. In addition they reinforced the secret bases in the different parts of the homeland, built new temporary secret bases as required by the situation, and recruited in the homeland and Northeast China patriotic young and middle-aged people to expand the ranks of the KPRA and train military stalwarts. At the same time they conducted on a wide scale a struggle to harass the enemy in the rear and weaken their war capabilities by raids, ambushes and subversive actions. They reconnoitred the enemy's military establishments, bases and strategic points, and strove to cause chaos in the enemy ruling system and military forces.

The units of the NAJAA also took part in the small-unit actions in those days. The theatres of these actions were allocated as follows: The units of the KPRA and the 1st Route Army and some units under the 2nd Route Army were to operate in Korea and southeastern Manchuria; the remaining main units of the 2nd Route Army were to operate in the area from north of Lake Xingkai to Donggang; and the units under the 3rd Route Army, in such counties as Qingcheng, Tieli and Hailun.

Going to Mt. Paektu and back to the temporary base in the Soviet Far East region, I guided the small-unit actions in Korea and southeastern Manchuria, and at the same time promoted military and political studies.

We ensured that those who had returned to the base from small-unit actions participated compulsorily and without exception in political studies and modern-warfare training.

In Camp South it was decided that I should first go to the area northeast of Mt. Paektu and to the homeland in command of a small unit consisting of a relatively large force of men. It would be followed, depending on the circumstances, by the small units led by Choe Hyon and An Kil. We defined the theatres of our actions and tasks.

In April 1941 I left the base with a small unit. Our task was to establish contact with the small units and groups operating in southeastern Manchuria and provide them with unified guidance. Another important task was to rebuild the revolutionary organizations that had been destroyed, build new ones, expand the armed ranks with young people recommended by secret organizations, and train these young people to be cadres needed for the final campaign for the liberation of the country and for the construction of a new country.

We also decided to find out the whereabouts of Wei Zheng-min.

The situation in the homeland and Manchuria in those days was threatening. From the early spring of 1941, the Japanese imperialists set out on new "punitive" operations. The "Nozoe Punitive Command" was disbanded and its authority was transferred to the headquarters of the Kwantung Army. Then the main units of the Kwantung Army and all the

“punitive” units under the headquarters of the military districts of the puppet Manchukuo army and the headquarters of the Kwantung military police went on a rampage of “punitive” actions against the People’s Revolutionary Army.

That was why some commanding personnel counselled me to take all precautions, as they were worried about my going to the enemy area in command of a small unit. Kim Chaek, too, was apprehensive about my safety at first.

Before leaving, I appointed Ryu Kyong Su company commander and Kim Il political instructor. Jon Mun Sop was appointed my orderly. When Jon’s appointment was announced, Kim Chaek gave him strict instructions never to be as much as an inch away from me.

An Yong was chosen as wireless operator of the small unit.

An Yong had operated in eastern and northern Manchuria. As a teacher for several years, he had educated children in the spirit of patriotism. While working in eastern Manchuria, he had organized an itinerant troupe and conducted mass enlightenment work. He was a man of wide knowledge and rich life experience. At the time he worked with the masses in northern Manchuria, he worked both as a kitchen helper and as a day labourer in an opium field.

We chose him as our radio operator because when he had been fighting in the unit in northern Manchuria he had taken a six-month radio-operating course in the Soviet Union.

He sported a bushy moustache, about which he was often teased.

The number of men in the small unit would have been about 30. We wore Japanese-style uniforms, so that we looked like Japanese.

In the dead of night in early April we crossed the border. Then we marched to the northeast of Mt. Paektu through the sites of our former bases.

We had lots of things to do northeast of Mt. Paektu.

After we had abandoned our guerrilla bases in eastern Manchuria and moved to West Jiandao, the enemy had committed full-scale destruction in eastern Manchuria and northeast of Mt. Paektu. In order to repair the damage, we had again gone to the area northeast of Mt. Paektu after the operation in

the Musan area, and exerted a positive revolutionary influence in the area.

Availing themselves of our temporary stay in the Soviet Union the enemy had again massed regular troops northeast of Mt. Paektu and raised a whirlwind of wholesale destruction. They then cried, “Peace has been secured in eastern Manchuria.”

For the revolution northeast of Mt. Paektu to be brought to an upswing once more, the KPRA had to make its presence felt through the audacious activities of its small units and groups. By demonstrating that the KPRA was still active, we were fully able to arouse the masses again.

We planned to raise a revolutionary upsurge in Antu, Wangqing, Yanji, Hunchun and Dunhua, and then proceed to Mt. Paektu to build more revolutionary organizations in West Jiandao and in the homeland while strengthening the forces for all-people resistance and selecting hundreds of patriotic young people for training in the Paektusan secret camp and the base in the Soviet Far East region as military and political cadres.

After a forced march lasting several days after crossing the border, we arrived at a valley not far from Daheixiazigou.

Once some Koreans living in Yanbian brought me a video tape they had recorded, saying that while exploring an area bordering three counties–Wangqing, Dongning and Hunchun–they had discovered a camping site of the guerrillas. I watched the video tape and recognized the area as the one our small unit had used as a temporary secret base.

When we arrived at the valley we had run out of food.

I sent Kim Il and some other men to raid the gold mine near Jinchang, Wangqing County, obtain food and conduct work with the masses there.

In the vicinity of the base, Jon Mun Sop caught a big bear. Several men had to carry it to the base on a pole. We extracted a pailful of grease from the bear.

Some days later, Kim Il returned with food. Crestfallen, he reported to me that Jang Hung Ryong had been killed on the mission. It had been because of Ji Kap Ryong that Jang had been killed. Ji had stubbornly insisted on having a meal on the way back from the raid on the gold mine, and the party was

delayed for about an hour, during which the pursuing enemy surprised them.

Regretting that he had not refused Ji's request to take a meal, Kim Il said he was ashamed to face me.

Jang's death tore our hearts apart. We felt even sadder as we looked back on how he had made painstaking efforts to make up for his mistake when he had been given a penalty concerning an incident involving an ox.

Coinciding with Jang's death, a guerrilla of Chinese nationality was captured by the enemy. The result was that the whereabouts of our unit was revealed. The enemy pursued us tenaciously, saying that Kim Il Sung had reappeared.

I thought that the news of our reappearance would rather serve our purpose. If the enemy made a commotion about this, then it would be known to the people, and in the long run it would be tantamount to making public the struggle of the KPRA. In fact, the enemy was giving publicity to our struggle!

To cover our traces, we crossed a pass and marched towards Taipinggou. In early May we arrived at Jiapigou, Wangqing County.

There I parted with Kim Il. He was to operate with a group which had a temporary secret base at Jiapigou. In the areas of Luozigou and Tumen-Jiamusi, the theatre of the group's operations, there were many organization members we had trained with great efforts in the days of the guerrilla bases. Telling Kim Il that Choe Chun Guk's family would be living somewhere around there, I asked him to establish contact with them.

An Yong, the radio operator, was to remain at the Jiapigou base with two of his assistants. The base played the role of an intermediary liaison centre.

I left Jiapigou with about 20 men for the wide areas on the Tuman northeast of Mt. Paektu. We planned to operate circling around Dunhua, Antu, Fusong, Helong, Yanji and several other counties in eastern Manchuria.

Passing through Dunhua County, we built a base at Hanconggou, Antu County, and set up a liaison centre. I had met Wei Zheng-min last at Hanconggou.

By the time we arrived at Hanconggou the season had changed. The forests were thick and it was hot at midday.

From there I dispatched groups for political work to Changbai, Dunhua and Chechangzi, as well as to the homeland and Mt. Paektu.

Han Chang Bong and Han Thae Ryong were dispatched to the Changbai area. Their task was to guide the activities of the secret organizations there and to locate the families and relatives of guerrillas, link them to organizations and send them to the homeland. Changbai was home to many of the soldiers of my unit. If their families and relatives were all affiliated with organizations and planted in the homeland, they could play an important role in forming organizations for the all-people resistance movement. I gave the two men the task of selecting excellent young people and sending them to our base in the Soviet Far East region. I told them in detail whom they should contact in Taoquanli and Changbai, and in other places. I ordered them to make inroads into the homeland after building up underground organizations there and entrench themselves among the working class.

Jon Mun Sop and Kim Hong Su went to the head of a valley in Chechangzi and dug up the weapons and maps we had buried there previously and returned with them.

Those who had been to Dunhua brought an old man with the surname of Pak from a forest near Dahuanggou. He had been eking out a living by hunting wild animals. He had in the past been affiliated with the Anti-Japanese Association, an underground organization, in Huadian County.

I had a long talk with the old man. He said that the mountains were crawling with the Japanese "punitive" troops and their stooges. He added that we should take care as the huts of charcoal burners and opium growers, as well as the huts where biers had been kept and caves were all occupied by enemy spies. Complaining that underground work was quite difficult as the enemy had locked up all the local people in internment villages, controlling their travel and making them keep watch on one another, he said he would, for all that, do his best for the benefit of the guerrillas.

Frequenting the Dunhua County town and the internment villages, the old

man brought us a list of those connected with our organizations, and the food and goods we needed. On the basis of the materials he obtained, we rebuilt the organizations in this area rapidly.

Later, the old man was arrested by the enemy and executed.

In this way, we enjoyed the active support and cooperation of the people in the days of small-unit actions. This support proved to be a great encouragement for us in our difficult struggle in the enemy area. This was clear testimony to the fact that the people had already been aroused to engage in all-people resistance.

While expanding the network of underground organizations, we endeavoured to find the whereabouts of the remaining units under the 1st Route Army and Wei Zheng-min. First we reorganized ourselves into three teams and operated in the counties of Dunhua and Huadian, the Antu area, the area north of Helong County and the area of Fusong County.

In those days Ryu Kyong Su did his work faithfully, despite many hardships.

In order to get to Jiapigou in Huadian County, he had to cross the swollen Fuer River. But the river was impassable. Finally, he ran out of food and he had to return. Going hungry for several days and worried about his failure to perform his task, he fell ill.

But someone had to go to Jiapigou, come what may.

I decided to go there personally, leading a small unit.

On hearing this, Ryu Kyong Su, who had been bed-ridden in a corner of the tent, struggled to his feet and approached me, saying, “You mustn’t go. I’ll try again.”

My efforts to dissuade him proved futile, and eventually I could not but accede to his request.

In every man’s life there is a moment when his character is tested. Each second and each minute of our do-or-die guerrilla struggle was such a moment. We experienced scores of times a day the moment when we had to make a decision whether we would dedicate our lives to the struggle or abandon it.

Whenever he was faced with a critical situation, Ryu Kyong Su threw himself into it as if he were a human bomb. So I always sent him to the tightest corner.

Assigning simple tasks to his comrades-in-arms and shouldering difficult tasks himself, giving others the credit for successes and trying to discover the cause of any mistake within himself when anybody had to be called to account, and willingly receiving reprimands or penalties–this was Ryu Gyong Su's personal appeal and an important reason why he was loved by all.

When he was leaving for Jiapigou, I ordered that he be given all the food we had. Behind my back, he asked Jon Mun Sop whether there was any food left for me. As Jon Mun Sop, at a loss what to say, was hesitant, Ryu reprimanded him for his failure to do his duty as my orderly, and poured out grain back from his knapsack.

Having performed his task, Ryu Kyong Su returned after several days. He had apparently undergone such great hardships that he fell unconscious as soon as he saw me. I pulled off his shoes. Gangrene had already set in in his feet, and bloody puss was oozing out. As I spooned thin gruel into his mouth, he managed to open his eyes and gave me the report of his work.

In the vicinity of Jiapigou they had met a peasant who had had contacts with the guerrillas. But the peasant had given them a wide berth. Failing to meet Kwak Ji San and others, they had roamed about and only heard the rumour that Wei Zheng-min had died.

Though he had done his best, Ryu Kyong Su was very sorry that he had not performed his tasks to the full.

Ji Kap Ryong, who had been to Wangbabozi with another group, surrendered to the enemy.

The trials of 1941 were a touchstone that distinguished once again who was a true revolutionary and who was a sham revolutionary.

These trials and examinations continued without interruption until the day of the country's liberation. The anti-Japanese revolutionary veterans who returned to the liberated motherland are precious men and women tested in trials one hundred times, nay, one thousand times.

Soon after Ji Kap Ryong's betrayal, the enemy, aware of our whereabouts, swarmed into our base like wolves. In command of the unit, I broke through the enemy's encirclement and headed for Antu via Dashahe and Xiaoshahe.

Working in the large area of Antu and Fusong, we concentrated on the work of expanding the organizations we had formed previously.

Through the members of the organizations we came to know that Wei Zheng-min had died of illness and a rumour was circulating that a notice carrying his photo was put up even in the town of Mingyuegou. We also obtained the information that 30 or so guerrillas were operating in the areas of Nanhamatang and Beihamatang, and in the vicinities of Mingyuegou and Yanji.

So we decided to do more work in this region. I dispatched a team to the areas of Shahezhang, Nanhutou, Dahuangwai and Beihamatang. I myself headed for Mt. Paektu with the remaining men.

In the Kanbaeksan secret camp I called together the heads of small units, groups for political work and revolutionary organizations, and gave them the task of holding fast to the Juche-oriented stand as required by the prevailing situation and of briskly conducting ideological education to consummate the Korean revolution by our own efforts. I also told them to make preparations for selecting excellent young people in the homeland and West Jiandao and giving them training in our base in the Soviet Far East region, and organize the work of the all-people resistance by training many men in the Paektusan secret camp and in the area of Mt. Kanbaek.

Following the meeting, we went to Onsong and guided the work of organizations in the homeland in this direction.

Our way back after operating in the area of Mt. Paektu was not smooth, either. Startled by the gunshots raised by our small units, the enemy were making desperate efforts to trace us. In those days the enemy "punitive" troops were everywhere to be seen–on high roads, on mountain tops, in valleys, and so on.

Laotougou in Yanji County was an enemy stronghold. As the military

police and special units of the Kwantung Army, the puppet Manchukuo army and police were entrenched there, it was difficult to pass through it.

Nevertheless, without passing through it, we could neither reach the mountain that led to the forest in Sifangtai nor go to the assembly place of our small unit.

We decided to try to pass through it by night in our Japanese military uniforms. But to our regret, the day broke before we could cross the railway line at Laotougou. We had to stop marching in the daytime and hide ourselves in a safe place. We looked down from a mountainside at some houses along a main road, and a railway station not far away. We made up our minds to enter the houses and wait for dusk to fall.

I quartered my men in the houses, and I myself stayed in a house on the road. One man, disguised as a Chinese peasant, kept watch while weeding in a nearby field with a hoe, while the others all rested.

At noon, men in yellow clothing flung open the door of the house I was staying in. They were surprised to find several men in military uniform in the house. When the man leading them attempted to turn back, one of my men poked a rifle into his back.

I told the man to come inside. Apparently they had taken us for Japanese soldiers. I asked him who he was. He said he was head of the Concordia Association and had come to the village on receiving a report that Kim Il Sung's unit had appeared there.

I told him point-blank that we were the KPRA. Hearing this, the man trembled.

I learned valuable information from him.

From a newspaper he had brought with him I learned for the first time that the Soviet-German War had broken out.

He told me that the Japanese had become agitated all of a sudden and were massing their troops in the Soviet-Manchurian border area, and a rumour had it that a Soviet-Japanese War would break out before long.

I told him to go to the police after we left the village and report that Kim Il Sung's unit had passed through Laotougou in broad daylight.

Receiving the report, the enemy were said to have made a great fuss, crying how could it happen that Kim Il Sung's unit had taken a meal and had a siesta under their very noses.

Without suffering any loss, we arrived at Jiapigou, Wangqing County, the assembly point. Kim Il and his men, who had returned after completing their mission, joined us there.

Following a meeting in June, I called another meeting of the heads of small units at the end of July in Jiapigou. The aim of the meeting was to conduct ideological education among all the officers and men and members of small units of the KPRA in relation to the situation that had changed rapidly in the international arena with the conclusion of a neutrality pact between the Soviet Union and Japan and the outbreak of the Soviet-German War.

A heated discussion arose among the members of small units about the outbreak of the Soviet-German conflict. Some said the conflict would open a bright vista for our revolution; some judged that if the Soviet Union had to sustain a pincer attack in the east and in the west by two powers, it would exert a negative influence on our revolution; and still others were of the opinion that the impact of the world situation on us should be judged only when the Japanese invasion of the Soviet Union became a reality.

It was in order to unify these opinions as soon as possible, instil in my men confidence in the victory of the revolution and rouse them to make better preparations for meeting the great event of national liberation on our own initiative that I convened the meeting.

At the meeting we reviewed the activities of the small units and groups that had been dispatched to different places, and discussed the course of our future activities.

Throughout the meeting, I stood by my principle:

"We must not vacillate whatever the change in the general trend. Germany's invasion of the Soviet Union is just digging its own grave. If Japan invades the Soviet Union, it will also be tantamount to digging its own grave. But Japan has no strength to do so. Look at the balance of forces

between the powers. Even if the earth changes to whatever form, fascism will go to ruin, and democracy will emerge victorious. A bright vista will be opened for our revolution. So we must not vacillate or be hesitant in the face of temporary difficulties. We must hold fast to the banner of the revolution. We must cherish our convictions and the confidence that we will liberate the country and consummate the Korean revolution by our own efforts."

At the meeting I indicated the course of our future small-unit actions. I said that we had to harass the enemy continually in their rear while avoiding reckless frontal confrontation and engagement with the enemy, whose forces were stronger than ours, so as to preserve our forces. I stressed that we should raid and destroy the enemy's convoys and supply bases, and that we should also intensify reconnoitring and political work with the masses for the campaign for liberating the country.

In early August we raided a road construction site between Wangqing and Luozigou.

In those days the Japanese imperialists were massing large numbers of troops in this area, which was close to the Soviet-Manchurian border area. We thought that if we raised gunshots in this area where the enemy soldiers thronged, the echo would be a great one. If we were to raise gunshots, we would raise them in the heart of the enemy area–this was our intention.

I sent two parties in two directions to cut off the enemy's retreat. Then we, disguised as Japanese soldiers, made an appearance at the construction site in fine array, disarming the road guards in an instant and bringing the enemy soldiers in the barracks under our control. We finished the battle so quickly that the road builders, perplexed, gazed at us vacantly. Only after Ryu Kyong Su shouted, "We are Kim Il Sung's guerrillas," did they rush to us from all sides and hug us.

After doing political work with them, we passed through the area north of Wangqing County and reached a mountain top overlooking the village of Taipinggou.

I was told that many rumours about us circulated in Wangqing after the battle.

From the top of the mountain I looked down on the village through binoculars. I could see the houses of Ri Kwang, O Jung Hup and Pak Kil Song. I could even see O Jung Hup's father walking up and down in his yard.

I gave Kim Il the task of establishing relations with them, and building secret organizations in this area.

Later Kim Il formed an underground organization keeping contact with O Chang Hui, O Jung Hup's father, and Pak Tok Sim, Pak Kil Song's father. He also planted secret organizations among the peasants in Nanbeidadong, and among the workers at the Xiaowangqing railway station. O Jung Hup's father told Kim Il that, with the rumour that Kim Il Sung's unit had now advanced to Mt. Paektu circulating, the local people were highly elated and full of confidence in the victory of the revolution.

The small units of the KPRA conducted on a considerable scale military and political activities to foil the enemy's operations in the border area between the Soviet Union and Manchuria, where the unit-train transportation and mobility of the enemy troops were brisk. It was in those days that our small units made the enemy military trains collide with one another in the yard of the railway station in Tumen and raided the enemy troops on the move in Toudaogou, Helong County, and in Wangqing County.

Concluding with success the small-unit actions in the homeland and Northeast China, we returned in August to the base in the Soviet Far East region.

In order to consolidate these successes, I came to Manchuria once again and even to the homeland in command of a small unit in mid-September 1941. The important mission at this time was to establish relations with the small units led by An Kil, Kim Il and Choe Hyon, analyze what they had reconnoitred, give on-the-spot guidance to the small units and groups active in the areas on the Tuman and different parts of the homeland, and instil in them the conviction of sure victory. This was of great importance in expanding the theatres of activities of small units and groups deep into the homeland, preparing for the great event of national liberation and getting forewarning of Japan's plan to invade the Soviet Union.

Before departure, I saw to it that An Yong met his wife. Ri Yong Suk, An Yong's wife, was in Camp North. She had married him, the night school teacher of her village, on the advice of her parents and fought together with him in Choe Yong Gon's unit. After her husband had gone to the Soviet Union to learn radio operation, she had not heard from him. How eagerly he must have wanted to see her, as he had heard she was in Camp North! So I told him to meet his wife. In the heart of a man who goes on a difficult mission there must be no clouds. After seeing her he seemed to have been further encouraged; he was all smiles.

Near the camp site we had set up in Wangqing there was a river. Ri Tu Ik and Jon Mun Sop caught fish there. They were both good at angling. The river was swollen after heavy rain. While angling, they caught a bear that was licking up red ants on a rotten stump.

We dismembered the bear and put some of its meat in the river. Mountain water is so cold that it preserves any meat put in it. Wheat flour kept in a deep pool does not degenerate, either. If it is put under the water in bag, it looks as if it would be soaked with water, but this is not true. Only the outer surface gets wet, by about one centimetre, and its inside remains intact. Life in the mountains is, as a matter of course, inconvenient, but there are knacks and methods peculiar to this sort of life, making it more comfortable.

One day I called the commanding personnel of the small units together and analyzed what they had reconnoitred so as to discuss the situation. They produced much interesting material. They were unanimous in their opinion that we should wait and see whether Japan would invade the Soviet Union or not, and it seemed that it would not happen in the foreseeable future.

As evidence, An Kil reported about railway wagons. According to him, the Japanese police had gathered local people together and told them that a war against the Soviet Union would break out sooner or later, and so they must build dugouts and roads. But investigation of railway goods wagons revealed that the open wagons transported guns, tanks and the like, but most of the covered wagons were empty.

The information Choe Kwang's small unit had gathered in the area of

Mudanjiang was also interesting. From a mountain near a railway station they monitored through binoculars how many enemy troops were being massed in the border area every day.

Whenever a train pulled into the station, Choe Kwang counted how many soldiers disembarked from each coach. One day he spotted an officer stepping down onto the platform with a cigarette between his lips. He engraved the officer’s face in his memory, apparently because he was especially arrogant in his behaviour or he gave himself airs with a cigarette.

The next day, Choe Kwang saw the officer again on the platform. He had been doubtful at first, as he wondered how could a man who had got off the train the previous day get off again today. But he was the same officer. That day too the officer was smoking a cigarette. Only then did Choe Kwang realize that the enemy was carrying the same troops in covered wagons back and forth every day to fool the guerrillas. It was a valuable information.

On his return to the base my men said, jokingly, that he could gather such information only because he was a heavy smoker. They said he could pay attention to the officer because he could not keep his eyes off the cigarette between the officer’s lips, and so he easily realized he was the man he had seen the previous day.

Thanks to cigarettes, he gathered good information. He was once punished also because of cigarettes.

He became the leader of a platoon of the Young Volunteers’ Corps at the age of 16. Because of his lack of years his men treated him as a neophyte. In order to show that he was a grown-up, not a novice, he began to smoke. After a few years he became addicted to cigarettes, and if he had no cigarettes in hand, he would get sick.

Once he returned to his unit after a battle carrying a case of cigarettes on top of a sack of wheat flour. The unit called a meeting of Party members and punished him. The meeting decided he deserved punishment as he had brought cigarettes, which could not be eaten, when he could have brought one more sack of wheat flour at a time when food was running short.

Through summing up all the information we had gathered in those days

we came to the conclusion that Japan was not ready to invade the Soviet Union, and its endeavour to pretend to be massing its troops on the Soviet-Manchurian border region was a trick to hide its plan of southward military expansion. We could guess that Japan was making preparations for a southern attack, not a northern one. This proved a great help to the Soviet Union in its formulation of a military strategy against Japan.

On the way back to the base in mid-November, we dropped in at Yonbong, Saeppyol County.

After my venture, several small units pushed into the homeland and Manchuria.

At the end of 1941 a small unit led by Kang Kon staged a large-scale ambush on an enemy train near Xinjiandian on the Mudanjiang-Jiamusi line, destroying the passenger cars carrying Japanese officers and freight cars carrying armoured vehicles and gasoline.

In the early spring of 1942 Pak Song Chol's small unit operated in the areas of Dongning, Ningan and Jiaohe Counties. Contacting guerrillas fighting in Laosongling, Ningan County, in Qinggouzi, Jiaohe, and in Wuchang County, they expanded their ranks and conducted small-unit actions until September, fighting battles continually, before returning to the base.

The small unit led by Chai Shi-rong of the NAJAA achieved great results in Ningan and Muling Counties and along the Mudan River.

Reviewing the success achieved in the first stage of small-unit actions, I thought that our making sorties into the homeland and Manchuria from the temporary base in the Far East region of the Soviet Union was a correct strategy.

Above all, we experienced in person that the switchover from large-unit actions to small-unit actions in the new situation was a timely measure and that we could deal heavy political and military blows to the enemy, and inspire the people to anti-Japanese resistance through small-unit activities no less effectively than we could through large-unit actions.

These successes inspired all our commanding personnel and rank-and-file soldiers with a firm conviction in the final victory.

Our small-unit actions demonstrated to our fellows in the homeland and abroad that the revolutionary army was as hale and hearty as ever, defeating the enemy and winning one victory after another, and that, if all people were united around the revolutionary army and conducted nationwide resistance, they were fully able to defeat Japanese imperialism and greet the day of national liberation.

The army and police of Japan and Manchukuo that had been assuming an air of triumph as if they had annihilated the guerrillas to the last man through the "special clean-up campaign for maintaining public peace in the southeastern area" and large-scale "punitive" actions were hemmed into a tight corner by our adroit small-unit operations.

Around the time when the IAF were formed, the small-unit actions of the soldiers of the KPRA became more brisk.

With an eye to the pending final campaign against Japan, we directed our main efforts to military reconnoitring and preparations for an all-people resistance campaign, and at the same time expanded the small-unit actions in breadth and depth.

The small-unit actions were conducted by putting the main emphasis on the actions of the small units comprised of soldiers of the main unit of the KPRA and combining them with military reconnoitring by the KPRA soldiers attached to the detachment of the IAF. This method of operation–acting independently and when necessary supporting and cooperating with each other–proceeded from the conditions on the ground and the requirements of the political and military situation that prevailed in those days. It enabled us to consolidate and further expand the political and military successes of the activities of the small units.

The small-unit actions conducted after the formation of the IAF were characterized by sticking to the principle of giving priority to group activities while combining them with the activities of larger small units. In accordance with this principle, in military operations we directed our main effort to the activities of groups and combined them, as appropriate, with raids and ambushes by small units.

Following are documents on the intensification of the activities of small units and groups of the KPRA:

"Kim Il Sung, Choe Hyon, Chai Shi-rong and others who found their way into Manchuria again have realized the disadvantages of armed resistance and strongly show the tendency of mainly conducting strategic activities involving the destruction of important military, industrial and economic installations, turning the masses into Reds or inspiring them to revolt, and subverting our soldiers." (Report from Mudanjing acting consul Furuya, June 23, Showa 16 (1941).)

"In early 1942 the Korean guerrillas performed some combat operations in northern Korea, destroying 22 Japanese planes and two hangars, and sinking two oil-tankers and 92 fishing boats." (V. Yarovoy, *Korea* , p. 44, September 1945, the Soviet Naval Forces Press.)

The small units dispatched to the homeland and Manchuria also worked to demoralize the enemy forces. Through their energetic activities, war-weariness grew rampant among the Japanese soldiers, and many young Korean people drafted into the army deserted with their weapons and joined our groups one after another. Some pilots of the enemy air corps rose in revolt and defected to the People's Revolutionary Army.

The greatest success we achieved through small-unit actions was foiling the enemy's attempt to annihilate us and making ample preparations for greeting the great event of national liberation while preserving and accumulating our forces.

These political and military successes proved a great asset for expediting the dawn of the liberation of the country.

## 5. Trust and Treachery

Recently our newspapers have been again carrying the reminiscences of the anti-Japanese guerrillas. This is a very good thing.

The reminiscences are precious treasures of our Party, each with a high educational value. How fine *The Conviction of Victory* is! In the 1960s our people read these reminiscences a lot. They had a strong impact on our postwar economic reconstruction and industrialization.

The more difficult the situation and our struggle, the more reminiscences like *The Conviction of Victory* we must read, because vacillators tend to crop up in such circumstances.

When our revolution was faced with severe trials like the Arduous March, stragglers, deserters and capitulators began to appear among those whose confidence in the victory of the revolution was shaky.

Vacillators and deserters also appeared in our ranks when a neutrality pact was signed between the Soviet Union and Japan. Ji Kap Ryong, who appears in *The Conviction of Victory*, was one of those deserters.

The neutrality pact between the Soviet Union and Japan was signed in April 1941, in the days when I was operating with a small unit. On his way back from a visit to Germany, Japanese Foreign Minister Matsuoka dropped in at Moscow and concluded the neutrality pact. Its repercussions reached our People's Revolutionary Army.

The gist of the treaty was that the signatories should maintain peaceful relations, respect the integrity and inviolability of each other's territory, and observe neutrality when either party engaged in hostilities with a third country.

As you can see, the treaty had no article that dealt with the Korean question. So there was no reason for the treaty to upset Koreans in particular.

Nevertheless, a considerable number of Korean revolutionaries were disappointed on hearing the news of the treaty. They had been considering the Soviet Union as their most reliable ally and, as the ally had joined hands with Japan, their mortal enemy, they thought that everything was hopeless. They became disheartened, as they had interpreted the clauses on respect for each other's territory and maintenance of peaceful relations in the treaty as a declaration that the Soviet Union and Japan would not engage in a war against each other.

This judgment produced, in the long run, pessimism, defeatism and capitulationism in corners of our ranks.

After signing the treaty with the Soviets, the Japanese gave wide publicity to it. They carried in their newspapers a photo of Stalin meeting Matsuoka. This photo had a strong psychological impact on waverers among us.

However, could the basic revolutionary stand of Korean communists change because their neighbouring countries had signed a treaty? Did we rely on a big country when we were starting the revolution? No. We started it with belief in ourselves. After starting the armed struggle, we received no aid, not even a single hand-grenade, from our neighbours. We waged the armed struggle, carried on Party building and conducted the united front movement by solving everything by our own efforts and by believing in the strength of our own people.

In the course of this we entered into a joint struggle with the Chinese people and formed an allied front with the Soviet people. An ally would be welcome, but it wouldn't matter if there were no ally. That was our consistent stand. That was why, from the first day of the armed struggle, we educated the army and the people in the spirit of independence and equipped them with the revolutionary spirit of self-reliance. We stressed time and again that independence meant life, that dependence on foreign forces meant the lot of slaves, that self-reliance would lead us to prosperity, and that we could neither liberate the country nor build a new country without relying on ourselves.

But some commanding officers paid little attention to education in the

spirit of liberating the country by our own efforts and the spirit of self-reliance; they only stressed the contradictions between the Soviet Union and Japan, and the greatness of the Soviet Union. This permitted the germs of worship of great powers to infiltrate the minds of men like Ji Kap Ryong–the idea that only a war between the Soviet Union and Japan would create a decisive opportunity for liberating Korea and that we could defeat Japan only with the help of such a great power as the Soviet Union.

The Japanese foreign minister’s visit to Moscow to sign the neutrality pact with the Soviet Union was no more than a smokescreen. The Japanese were always looking for a chance to push north, in other words, to attack the Soviet Union. Japan and Germany had agreed in secret to cooperate in an attack on the Soviet Union, and planned to divide the vast territory of the Soviet Union into two parts, with the Urals as the demarcation line to be occupied by each from the east and west, respectively.

However, Japan was not yet strong enough to invade the Soviet Union. So the southward policy got the upper hand. It was Japan’s intention to occupy Southeast Asia, store up sufficient strategic reserves and then march into the Soviet Far East and swallow up the region as far as the line of the Urals only after Nazi Germany had inflicted fatal wounds on the Soviet Union. The strategy could be likened to the proverb, “waiting for a persimmon to ripen and fall of its own accord.” Japan’s signing of the neutrality pact with the Soviet Union was a contortion in her timetable.

As German forces invaded the Soviet Union two months after the signing of the pact, Japan immediately ordered her Kwantung Army to stage “special exercises”. This was as good as a preliminary order for a war against the Soviet Union. During these exercises the strength of the Kwantung Army on the Soviet-Manchurian border doubled. This revealed what the Japanese really had in mind.

The mere fact that Matsuoka, the mastermind of the neutrality pact, asserted that a war against the Soviet Union was imminent shows how cunning and brazen-faced the Japanese ruling circles were.

Was the Soviet Union fooled by this trick of the Japanese? It knew

Japan's strategy too well for that. Seeing, however, that Japan was taking the initiative in proposing to maintain peaceful relations and respect each other's territorial integrity, the Soviet Union, that had been guarding against a possible pincer attack from the east and west by Japan and Germany, felt that this was a lucky chance. In those days the Soviet Union was faced with an unprecedented threat of invasion by Nazi Germany. The large German forces massed on its western frontier might attack at any time. Japan's professed neutrality in this situation, in spite of her covetous eye on Siberia, gave the Soviet Union the respite of a possible delay in having to fight a two-front war.

When Matsuoka was leaving Moscow, Stalin was said to have seen him off at the railway station. This fact eloquently spoke of the mental state of the Soviet leadership on the eve of the Soviet-German War.

So how ignorant it was to think that the Soviet Union had become a friend of Japan by signing the neutrality pact!

The more tense the situation is, the soberer must be the estimate and judgment of it. If you take a phenomenon at its face value, failing to see through its essence, you are liable to make a fatal mistake. Ji Kap Ryong made such a mistake.

Ji Kap Ryong's defection was also called the Wangbabozi incident.

The incident took place in the spring of 1941, when I was operating in the Antu area in command of a small unit. From a base in Hanconggou, I was directing small units and groups operating in different areas. The greatest difficulty we had at that time was the fact that all the local people were confined in internment villages. We had to get in touch with them, but it was not easy.

The only way was to obtain help from the hunters, charcoal burners and medicinal-herb collectors who used to roam the mountains. Hunters caught deer from early spring to autumn. They caught them by digging pits, in which they placed metal-tipped stakes, and then covering them with thin twigs and grass before spreading salt on top. Deer which stepped on the grass to lick the salt would fall into the pit and get pierced by the stakes.

If we dealt with these hunters tactfully, we could get in touch with secret organizations and learn the enemy’s movements.

I divided the small unit into several groups, which I dispatched on missions to different places. Ji Kap Ryong and Kim Pong Rok were sent to Wangbabozi to work among the local inhabitants and obtain food.

Headquarters ordered the leaders of these small groups to report the results of their work once every five days. But no report came from Ji’s group. This was unusual. I had to send a responsible man to find out the situation with Ji’s group, but I had no one. At that very moment Ryu Kyong Su’s group returned to Headquarters. Kim Ik Hyon and Xu Bao-ren, a soldier of Chinese nationality, were the other members of Ryu’s group. The three of them were tough men, as hard as birch trees, but their appearance was appalling.

They said they had experienced manifold hardships; they had run out of food; they had had to make a detour twice as long as planned, because the Fuerhe River was swollen; and one of them had suffered from cramp in his stomach. To make matters worse, they had encountered an armed band of immigrants from the Ryukyu Islands in Japan disguised as peasants when they were passing Dapuchaihe or somewhere. They had had a hard time of it pursued by these people.

On hearing about this armed band, I thought the Japanese imperialists were really nasty and cunning.

Ryu Kyong Su and Kim Ik Hyon told me the story in turn.

The band numbered about 100. As they wore peasant clothes and were sowing seeds, our men thought they might obtain food with their help. This got them into trouble.

Hiding by the roadside, our men watched for a chance. When they saw a man walking to the edge of the field, they told him that they were anti-Japanese guerrillas, and asked him if he could help them buy food. But the peasant did not understand them. Perceiving that he understood neither Korean nor Chinese, they thought he must be deaf. So they tried gestures. Only then did he understand.

The peasant walked slowly back into the field, and then all of a sudden shouted something. Immediately, the men in the field scattered here and there and took up rifles from behind piles of stones and bushes. They pounced upon our men, firing and shouting. Simultaneously, two machine-guns began to fire.

They were almost trapped. They ran for more than a mile, and sank down exhausted as soon as they had thrown off their pursuers. By chance they found some potatoes in a field, boiled them and ate them. They could not find the owner of the field, so they wrapped in oil paper 50 *yuan* to pay for the potatoes, fastened it on a pole and set the pole at the edge of the field so that the owner would notice it. In those days a draught ox cost about 50 *yuan*, and they left 50 *yuan* as the price of a few potatoes!

The fact that they encountered a band of Ryukyuan immigrants armed even with machine-guns speaks volumes about how trying the circumstances were in the days of small-unit actions. In order to disintegrate the revolutionary ranks the enemy enlisted every means and method conceivable.

When he knew that somebody had to go to see what was the matter with Ji Kap Ryong's group, Kim Ik Hyon, though utterly exhausted, volunteered for the mission.

The next day, I dispatched him to Wangbabozi.

Kim Ik Hyon found that Ji Kap Ryong, out of defeatism, had totally neglected the assignments entrusted to him by Headquarters. Ji was spending most of his time, from morning till evening, looking down at a village from the top of a mountain.

Having gone hungry for four days, Kim Pong Rok was lying in a lean-to. He told Kim Ik Hyon that he had not performed his mission, and felt too listless to go to Headquarters to make a report.

When Ji Kap Ryong returned to the hut, Kim Ik Hyon reasoned with him: "Nearly ten days have passed since you came here on a mission. Is it right just to hang around here without making a report to Headquarters? Let's meet hunters this very evening and set to work."

Ji Kap Ryong said the situation was dangerous so they had to wait.

However hard Kim Ik Hyon tried to persuade him, it fell on deaf ears.

The next morning, when Kim Ik Hyon and Kim Pong Rok went to wash their faces, Ji Kap Ryong took their rifles away from them. He said to them: "I have followed the armed ranks for nearly ten years. In the course of this I have tasted all possible hardships, but I have endured them with the hope that the day of Korea's independence would come after the hardships. Now this dream has come to naught. You know that the Soviet Union and Japan have concluded a neutrality pact. I used to believe that deep-rooted hostile contradictions exist between them, and a war will break out between them before long. I had hoped that in the event of such a war we could defeat the Japanese army in cooperation with the Soviet forces and liberate the country. But this is now out of the question. I can't engage in this absurd struggle any longer. Worse still, I have had a relapse of a disease. So I'm going home."

Kim Ik Hyon asked him if he really meant what he said.

"Yes. I have made my mind up after thinking it over carefully for several days. Follow me if you also want to go," was his reply.

"If you want to go," retorted Kim Pong Rok in tears, "go alone. If I have to die, I'll die at the side of the Comrade Commander. The future of the revolution may seem gloomy, but how can you desert him?"

Ji said, "Though I desert, I'll never commit foul crimes like Rim Su San. Believe me, wherever I go, I will live like a man."

Kim Ik Hyon berated him: "However gloomy the future of the revolution is, we can't follow you and desert the Comrade Commander. How immoral it is to follow a man when the times are good and desert him when the times are bad! You say you will live like a man. But you will see after going down the mountain that you will not be able to live a manly life however hard you may try. From the moment you lay down your arms, your life will be worth no more than a pebble. Look what became of Rim Su San, Choe Yong Bin and Kim Paek San. So don't go over to the enemy on any account. Give us our rifles back."

Saying that his mind was made up, Ji told them he would not give them their rifles back until he had descended the mountain safely and that he would

hang the rifles on a bridge not far away from the hut before going on his way.

After Ji went away, Kim Pong Rok went to the bridge and returned with the rifles.

Kim Ik Hyon and Kim Pong Rok left for the rendezvous. As they had not eaten anything for days and encountered enemy soldiers on their way, they arrived at the rendezvous much later than the set date. So they could not meet the messenger I had sent there. It was a rule in our guerrilla army that Headquarters would move to another place after a small unit had been dispatched and a messenger had been sent to the former site of Headquarters.

Though they failed to meet the messenger, the two men did not leave the place. Eating grass boiled in water, they waited for the opportunity to get in touch with Headquarters. When grass is boiled in water with salt in a pail, the water becomes green. They lived on that water. One time they boiled an ox bone discarded several months previously. Something like rice was floating in the soup. They were maggots, not grains of rice. After eating the soup with the maggots, they swooned.

On the verge of death from hunger after some days, they wrote a message on a tree after scraping some of the bark away. They wrote with a piece of charcoal they had found at the site of the campfire that Ji Kap Ryong had deserted, and Kim Ik Hyon and Kim Pong Rok had died of hunger. They then lay in the bushes side by side, waiting for death. Had we not sent Jon Mun Sop there at that time, the two men would have died right there.

Reading what was written on the tree, Jon Mun Sop called out their names as he searched for them. But the two men had no strength to respond. Jon Mun Sop found them only after hearing a faint groan.

Jon Mun Sop took a great deal of trouble to bring the two comrades-in-arms to Headquarters. In the end he grew so worn out he could hardly move his legs. With all his strength he brought the two men to Headquarters. Only after we poured some spoonfuls of thin gruel into their mouths did Kim Ik Hyon and Kim Pong Rok gain consciousness.

This is the story of the Wangbabozi incident.

We learned serious lessons from this incident.

The most serious lesson was that we should teach our men to refrain from worshipping great powers, and believe in their own strength.

Ji Kap Ryong's desertion was the consequence of his lack of confidence in the victory of the revolution as well as the result of his worship of the Soviet Union. Some commanding officers inculcated in their men illusions about the Soviet Union, telling them that a war would inevitably break out between the Soviet Union and Japan owing to the contradictions between them, and that Japan would then be defeated. Such talk led to this nasty incident.

It is true that some of our men entertained illusions about the Soviet Union. Around a big power there are always people who follow it meekly or who idolize it. That was why some people thought that the prospects for our revolution were dim when they saw the photo of Stalin meeting Matsuoka, and in the end thought of deserting.

In order to ensure that such an incident as Ji Kap Ryong's desertion would not occur again, we put forward the slogan, "Let us carry out the Korean revolution by our own efforts!" and strongly promoted the struggle to eliminate the worship of great powers.

The other important lesson we learned from the Wangbabozi incident was that a revolutionary's faith was his lifeblood, and that his life would come to an end when his faith withered away.

Ji Kap Ryong deserted because he had lost confidence in the victory of the revolution; Kim Ik Hyon and Kim Pong Rok returned to Headquarters without defecting because they continued to cherish their faith even though they almost starved to death, believed even when waiting for their end lying in the bushes that though they might die, the revolution would emerge victorious.

Faith is the lifeblood of revolutionaries.

Where does confidence in the victory of the revolution come from? It comes from one's belief in one's own strength. A revolutionary can stick to his faith only when he firmly believes in his leader, in his own strength, and in the strength of his collective, his fellows and his Party.

A man embarks on the road of revolution with a definite faith. How long he holds fast to this faith depends on how it is tempered. Faith tempered lackadaisically will soon degenerate. Political and ideological training through organizational and ideological life and revolutionary practice is the way to temper one's faith.

Some people think that a man with many years of revolutionary activity has naturally a strong faith, but this is not true. A man who does not cultivate himself well may be weak in his faith despite the long period of his revolutionary career; and a man who persistently cultivates himself can be strong in his faith despite the short period of his revolutionary service.

In regard to the length of his revolutionary career, Ji Kap Ryong was quite senior to Kim Ik Hyon and Kim Pong Rok. He had fought in the guerrilla army for nearly ten years. By that time, Kim Ik Hyon had served in the People's Revolutionary Army for four years. Kim Pong Rok was no more than a new recruit, with two years of service.

Who, then, became a turncoat? Ji Kap Ryong, with many years of service, deserted, but his juniors, Kim Ik Hyon and Kim Pong Rok, remained faithful. This means a man who has forsaken his faith becomes degenerate no matter how many years of service he has and no matter how great his achievements.

Having fought in the guerrilla army from its early years, Ji Kap Ryong had been appointed company commander for his exploits. But when days of trial arrived, he began to vacillate. At first he did not perform his revolutionary duty faithfully, on the pretext of having a stomachache. So women guerrillas made a waistband for him. Sympathetic to the supposedly ailing man, we took special care of him. But in the end he ran away, unable to endure hardships.

He had fought bravely when he had faith, but when he lost the faith, he became a straggler and betrayed the cause.

Rim Su San became a renegade, not because he had a short record of revolutionary struggle; he could even be called a veteran in view of his years of revolutionary struggle. In 1933 when Pak Song Chol, who had been working at a mine in Badaogou, went to Cangcaicun to join the guerrillas, Rim Su San was

already the political instructor of the 2nd company of the Yanji guerrilla unit there. He scolded Pak Song Chol for not coming through the proper organizational channel, and told him to go back.

Before becoming a guerrilla, Rim Su San had finished the middle-school course and taught at a school. He was very tall, taller than Kim Il. For his good looks, knowledge and eloquence, he won the favour of his comrades-in-arms in his early days in the guerrilla army.

But his true nature gradually began to show itself. Guerrillas whispered behind his back that, for all his oratorical skill, he was a coward.

In one month in the spring of 1938 we raided Liudaogou twice. Why? It was because the first odds-on battle commanded by Rim Su San had ended in a debacle.

Liudaogou was a walled town with about 1,000 houses. On receiving a report that there were not many enemy troops there, Rim Su San immediately attacked the town with his regiment. As soon as the battle began, they encountered an unexpected force of enemy troops, who had arrived at the town after our scouts had reconnoitred it.

When Rim's regiment entered the walled town, the enemy soldiers were having a party. They could have been wiped out without much effort. But Rim Su San was intimidated by the numerical superiority of the enemy force, and quickly ordered the regiment to retreat. This order threw the regiment on the defensive.

Bewildered, our men stopped fighting, and the enemy, taking advantage of this opportunity, soon switched over to the counteroffensive, firing machine-guns. In the end the regiment withdrew from the town in failure.

After this battle, the enemy gave wide publicity to the effect that they had repulsed the guerrillas' attack. On hearing this, the people became dispirited. Rim Su San's error in the first battle at Liudaogou damaged the reputation of the People's Revolutionary Army, so I organized another attack on the town. Under my command, the unit attacked the walled town and occupied it at a stroke. Thenceforth, the enemy ceased their propaganda.

At a meeting of the commanding officers, we criticized Rim Su San for

his mistake. When analyzed ideologically, cowardice was the basic cause of his mistake.

However, Rim Su San did not rectify his shortcoming even after he was criticized. At the time of the Arduous March he lived in indolence in a service camp without executing the tasks Headquarters had assigned to him. At a meeting held in Beidadingzi, he was again criticized for not reforming himself. Some suggested demoting him from the post of chief of staff.

But I gave him another chance.

He betrayed our confidence. Wearying of the protracted armed struggle and alarmed at the appearance of the "Nozoe Punitive Command" and its unprecedented size, he trembled with fear. Then taking the opportunity of performing a mission solo at the secret camp in Dongpaizi, he defected to the enemy. Not only did he run away alone, but in collaboration with the enemy he helped the "punitive" force to set up an ambush around the secret camp and capture many of our comrades. He even led a "punitive" force to our Headquarters in an attempt to capture me.

I don't remember seeing much of him firing on the battle line. On the plea of doing political work, he always sought shelter from bullets.

When he surrendered, the enemy were as triumphant as if they had caught a tiger alive, saying that a very important person had defected with many of his subordinates from Kim Il Sung's guerrilla army to the Empire of Japan.

To be frank, his surrender did send a certain shock through our ranks. Their faces serious, all my men were sullen for days. His surrender actually did our unit a considerable amount of harm.

For all this, I did not become alarmed or disheartened.

Rim Su San was a degenerate. By a degenerate I mean a man who is ideologically rotten. Such a man does only harm to the ranks.

The appearance of traitors in the course of the revolution is a universal phenomenon that can be seen at any time. The history of the international communist movement not only celebrates men like Stalin, Zhou En-lai, Thalmann and Che Guevara, it is also stained by traitors to their leaders and their cause.

Bernstein and Kautsky worshipped Marx and Engels, but they are recorded in history as traitors. They betrayed Marxism as well as Marx and Engels, their mentors and seniors in the revolution. Trotsky, who once held an important post in the Bolshevik Party, became an enemy of the Soviet state. Zhang Guo-tao defected from Mao Ze-dong and the CPC to Jiang Jie-shi. All these traitors ended their days in misery. But did those revolutions get frustrated or retreat because of their betrayals? Each time the turncoats were removed, the revolution developed and surged up with fresh vitality. After the removal of Trotsky, how remarkably socialist construction was promoted in the Soviet Union! Trotsky thought that without him, everything Stalin did would fail, and the Soviet state would go to ruin. But the Soviet people built their country up to be the leading socialist power in the world, as well as a global power. After Zhang Guo-tao deserted the CPC and became a Kuomintang parasite, the Chinese revolution did not wane; on the contrary it continued its upward spiral and achieved nation-wide victory.

Though Rim Su San, after defecting to the enemy, divulged the secrets of our Headquarters and did us harm as a guide for the enemy "punitive" forces, the KPRA became neither weakened nor disrupted. Our ranks united more solidly and our revolution, preserving its own purity, made a strong dash towards its ultimate victory.

Traitors to the revolution also appeared during socialist construction in our country after the war. Choe Chang Ik, Yun Kong Hum, Ri Phil Gyu and others attempted to place obstacles in the way of our people's forward movement. Having failed to realize their factional scheme, they chose to betray the Party and their motherland. As they dropped away, our revolution made a fresh upsurge and ushered in the era of Chollima. Since then the world has called our country Chollima Korea.

There were traitors also in the ranks of the nationalist movement.

Choe Nam Son was one of them. It is well-known that he was one of the drafters of the Declaration of Independence at the time of the March First Popular Uprising. I once read his travelogue of Mt. Paektu, and found that every word and every sentence were filled with his patriotic spirit.

However, this famous patriot suddenly abandoned his conscience and faith, and followed the road of betrayal. In the early 1940s, when the anti-Japanese armed struggle was undergoing most severe trials, he wrote pamphlets with our names in big letters, urging us to surrender, which the Japaese dropped from the air.

A typical pamphlet written by him and few other pro-Japanese elements reads in part:

"You young men who are eating and sleeping in the open, roaming about desolate mountains and fields aimlessly!

"You wretches who are unable to see the light of modern civilization in the wilderness of the primeval forests, throwing your precious lives away as if they were worthy of nothing, all because of a blind belief! The day has come at last when you have to put an end to your lives of misery. Which do you want, to live or to die?

"Oh, young men who are wandering in the forest,

"Read this letter and make up your minds right now. Rush to the road of revival. Feel shame at your shameful deeds, and repent of actions that need repenting of. Break with your unstable lives, unprecedented in the world, right now and return to the warm embrace of your compatriots. In this way you can devote your valour and chivalry to the sacred cause of building a new East Asia. It is not too late.

... ... ...

Headquarters of the Association for Supporting
the Special Operations in the Southeast Area
Adviser Choe Nam Son
Director Pak Sok Yun

... ... ..."

(Magazine *Samcholli*, No. 1, pp. 206-09, Showa 16 (1941).)

In the KPRA there was a physician in his fifties. He was called the "Chungchong Province doctor". His real name was Ryu Han Jong. While following my unit for some months, he treated wounded guerrillas in various places. Associating with him at this time, I found him to be an upright man. By means of a few gold needles and a scalpel, he treated every type of

wound. As he was so skilful and, moreover, as he was so sincere, he was respected and loved by all the guerrillas. I also respected and loved him. Once I obtained a bear skin for him because he often slept in the open. I made sure that when my men captured booty after attacking towns, they took medicines and medical instruments needed by the doctor.

As his health broke down, we sent him back to his home in early 1940. Frankly speaking, to live the life of a guerrilla in the mountains at his age was difficult to do with mere will or determination.

Three months later he came to us again. With tears in his eyes, he said, “These past months I have lived a comfortable life, eating the food my wife cooked. But I could hardly swallow it. If I were to stoop to keeping myself safe and sound at home, how could I call it a proper life?”

It was a noble way of thinking, peculiar to men with unstained consciences. But it was not suitable for him to stay with us because of his health. I still remember how hard I tried to persuade him to go back home. He finally did go back, but reluctantly.

Immediately after liberation, he called on me with his daughter. My happy reunion with him is still fresh in my memory. Squeezing my hands, he said in tears that he had nothing to regret now that he had seen me in good health. I told him that as the Japanese had been driven out, he should participate in the building of a new country with me.

He settled down in Pyongyang, working for the association for supporting revolutionaries and at the Pyongyang Institute as a surgeon. His daughter became a typist in the clerical section of the Provisional People’s Committee of North Korea. His two sons joined the Korean People’s Army, and fell in action.

As you can see, how remarkable the contrast is between him and men like Choe Nam Son, Rim Su San and Ji Kap Ryong! When Rim Su San, devoid of faith, was thinking of deserting, the doctor joined the guerrillas. When Choe Nam Son was scattering over Manchuria and Mt. Paektu leaflets he had written urging us to surrender, the doctor came to us again and volunteered to rejoin the guerrillas whom he had taken leave of a few months before, with a

yearning for the life of guerrillas, the life which Choe Nam Son described as "unstable" in the "primeval forests".

An ordinary doctor as he was, how noble he is in contrast to Choe Nam Son, Rim Su San and Ji Kap Ryong! He appears noble because of his pure conscience.

According to my experience, those who betrayed the revolution without any regret were those who moved with the trend of the times without any faith–grumblers, chance elements, careerists, the feeble-hearted, and those who participated in campaigns because they thought that it was the popular thing to do.

Those who neglect their duty, those who are irresponsible in their work, those who are always complaining of one thing or another, pulling faces when given tasks, those who are glib in talking about revolution in front of others, but busy feathering their own nests behind the scenes, those who take credit for work done by others without any hesitation, and those who tell lies, feeling no prick of conscience, will also abandon the red flag and defect to the enemy's camp as soon as they have a chance to do so.

A common feature of these types of men is that they are without exception devoid of conscience.

If a revolutionary abandons his conscience, what remains in him? Nothing. His ideals, ideology and moral fibre will all break up. If he forsakes his conscience, his personality will also be deformed.

That one must be a man before being a revolutionary means that one must be conscientious and faithful to morality. Only a man with conscience can be moral and loyal. A man without conscience is devoid of morality, loyalty, self-sacrificing spirit, sense of justice and sincerity. Comrade Kim Jong Il's remark that loyalty to the leader must be maintained as one's faith, conscience, morality and everyday concern is an aphorism.

Only a man with conscience can become a revolutionary. If his conscience becomes stained, his faith also becomes stained; a crack in his conscience means a crack in his faith and the paralysis of his fighting spirit. This is why from the moment he abandons conscience, a revolutionary ceases to be a revolutionary and becomes a good-for-nothing.

We cannot go the same way or eat from the same pot with those who have lost their conscience. From the moment they have forsaken their conscience they dream different dreams from ours and play double games. We must break with them, or else we will suffer a great harm.

The moment his conscience began to deteriorate, Ji Kap Ryong lost the qualities of a revolutionary.

It was during the battle at Liukesong that I found something insidious in him.

The target of the main attack in that battle was the enemy barracks, and O Jung Hup's 7th Regiment and Hwang Jong Hae's unit were to perform the mission. When the battle started, thunderous gunshots rang out from the barracks, and after some minutes suddenly stopped. This meant that the barracks had fallen. But a few minutes later a machine-gun started firing from there. I wondered what that meant, and immediately sent Ji Kap Ryong to ascertain the situation. But turning back halfway, he rushed back and plumped himself down, wailing that he had been wounded. I found that the wooden stock of his Mauser had been shattered by a bullet, but there was no wound on his body. He might have got a bruise when he fell down from the shock of the bullet hitting the wooden stock.

I realized that he was scared, so I sent Ji Pong Son and Kim Hak Song on that mission.

Braving a hail of bullets, the two men dashed there and returned with a report that the remaining enemy soldiers entrenched in a secret passage under the barracks were putting up resistance. Without delay, I sent an order to withdraw our men from the barracks and put down the enemy in the underground passage by flame tactics.

But O Jung Hup fell before my order reached him. On his own judgment he employed the flame-throwing tactic, but he was fatally wounded while searching the passage in haste, without withdrawing his men.

Had Ji Kap Ryong not turned back halfway, but run to the enemy barracks and confirmed the situation, my order would have been conveyed to O Jung Hup without delay, and the accident might not have happened. Every

minute and even every second counts in a combat situation. It was because Kim Hak Song and Ji Pong Son were late in carrying out the mission Ji Kap Ryong had failed to perform that O Jung Hup was hit by enemy fire from the underground passage.

At that time Ji Kap Ryong had already lost the conscience of a soldier. If another man had been on that mission, he would not have turned back, even if he had received a serious wound.

What a great disaster the irresponsible and cowardly conduct of a man with a guilty conscience caused!

Those who abandoned their conscience and betrayed the revolution ended their days in misery, without exception. History has passed a stern judgment on those fellows. Even those who were pardoned for minor offences did not hold their heads up again as long as they lived.

In contrast, the people bestowed their highest acclamations on the fighters who cherished revolutionary consciences and held fast to their faith till the day of victory, and crowned them with laurels.

Pak Song Chol, who had been rebuked by Rim Su San for volunteering to join the guerrillas without going through the proper organizational channel when he came to the guerrilla zone from a mine in Badaogou, followed the thorny path of struggle to the end and returned to the motherland. Today he continues to work for the revolution in an important government post.

One year, while on a march, Pak Song Chol, after receiving permission from his commander, dropped in at his house. For several years after joining the army he had been anxious to know how his family were getting on. As his unit was marching past his home village, he just wanted to see his kinsfolk.

On entering his house, however, he found himself in a fix. Taking their child on her back, his wife insisted on following him to the guerrilla army.

He tried to dissuade her, saying, “Are you mad? How on earth can a woman with a child go with the guerrillas?”

But she would not let go of his belt.

It seemed that persuasion was no use, and she might burst into tears if he went his way, pushing her away violently. If she did so, the whole village

would soon know all about it, and then the enemy would learn of it and arrest her and the child because they were the family members of a guerrilla.

As he was at a loss what to do, his mother reasoned with her daughter-in-law.

"If you don't behave yourself, you may have your husband killed," she said. "Suppose he fails to catch up with his unit by the appointed time, then he will be branded as a deserter. That would mean that he would become a traitor. Do you want that?"

His wife only shed silent tears. For all that, she would not release her grip on his belt.

This time Pak Song Chol's mother scolded him.

"If a man leaves his house for a great cause, then he must do so resolutely. Why did you creep into the house at night, only to raise a fuss? Don't show your face again in this house. If you come again before the country's liberation, I'll break your legs."

Only then did his wife let go of his belt.

He was so moved by his mother's words that he left the house there and then.

In terms of their knowledge of affairs, can Pak's mother and wife be compared to Rim Su San? But in terms of their view of and attitude to the revolution, they were teachers incomparably superior to Rim Su San. How beautiful was his wife's aspiration to fight as a guerrilla carrying their child on her back, and how ennobling and sublime was the will of his mother who threatened his son that she would break his legs if he appeared in the house again before the country was liberated!

On the day Kim Ik Hyon was awarded the title of Vice Marshal of the Korean People's Army, I recalled the day when he had come to the Diyangxi plateau at a tender age to volunteer for the guerrilla army, and the day when he had written his will on a tree after scraping some of the bark away and waited for the moment of his death from hunger in some bushes while coming back to Headquarters, spurning Ji Kap Ryong's urgings to desert.

It was because Kim Ik Hyon was prepared for death and was not afraid of it that he could survive and become known to posterity.

Kim Ik Hyon was a fine guerrilla, and Jon Mun Sop, who brought Kim Ik Hyon and Kim Pong Rok back to Headquarters, supporting them all the way, was also tenacious and steadfast in his comradely loyalty. Tears were streaming down his face when he brought the two unconscious comrades-in-arms back to Headquarters. The haggard looks of the two men were too heartbreaking for him to hold back tears.

Had Jon Mun Sop been a man of feeble revolutionary conviction, devoid of loyalty and conscience, he would have deserted his comrades in order to escape hunger himself. A little way from the mountain, he could have gone anywhere he wanted. There were no wire entanglements, fences or watch-towers. If he had thrown away his rifle, descended the mountain and sealed a document with his thumb, then he could have eaten his fill and slept comfortably on a warm floor.

But Jon Mun Sop did not take that road. Carrying his comrades-in-arms pickaback in turn, he returned to Headquarters. Subsequently he followed me unwaveringly and remained faithful to the revolution.

We must bring up large numbers of men of unshakable faith like the veteran fighters of the anti-Japanese revolution, who adorned their lives with brilliance. Revolution and the cause of socialism cannot be promoted only with desire. Only when we cherish a strong faith can we defend ourselves and safeguard socialism.

Only those who have the faith that they can survive even though they go hungry for a hundred days, those who can endure with a smile a thousand days of difficulty in order to live a single day of dignified life, those who believe that, though they become a handful of dirt in a desolate forest on a lonely island, their organization will find them and remember them, and those who are prepared to blow themselves up or to stand on the gallows without hesitation so as to remain faithful to the leader who brought them up and to their comrades, can always emerge victorious.

The more difficult the situation of the country is, the more efficiently the education in confidence in the victory of the revolution and in the cause of socialism must be conducted. I respect and love the people with strong faith.

# 6. Formation of the International Allied Forces

In the closing period of his life, the great leader recollected his activities in the Soviet Union in the first half of the 1940s, activities which had not been dealt with extensively before in the history of our revolution.

His recollections are of great historical significance in that they clearly explain the formation of the IAF and their overall activities.

As the 1940s approached, the anti-Japanese revolutionary struggle entered a new stage of development, when it became capable of opening up a decisive phase in the course of accomplishing national liberation. An important aspect of our struggle during this period is the fact that we organized the IAF in the Soviet Union with our Chinese and Soviet comrades-in-arms in the summer of 1942 and engaged in political and military preparations in every possible way in order ultimately to annihilate the Japanese imperialists.

The fact that the KPRA formed the IAF with the armed forces of the Soviet Union and China and waged a joint struggle with them can be viewed as a new stage in the development of the Korean revolution.

Our revolution set as its immediate task the driving out of the Japanese imperialists and the liberation of the country. With the formation of the IAF we were to carry out national liberation and concurrently the world-historic task of ultimately wiping out Japanese militarism.

With the organization of the IAF, a great change took place in our armed struggle. It can be said that, with the formation of the allied forces as a turning point, we switched from the stage of our joint struggle with the Chinese people to the stage of extensive joint struggle, which meant an

alliance of the armed forces of Korea, China and the Soviet Union, the stage of a new common front joining the mainstream of the worldwide anti-imperialist, anti-fascist struggle.

The first half of the 1940s can be said to have been a period when the KPRA was making final preparations for the great event of national liberation on its own initiative while consolidating its ranks and preserving and training the hard cores in areas favourable for launching decisive and final offensive operations.

We organized the IAF with our Soviet and Chinese comrades in July 1942. Following this, we strengthened our own forces for the Korean revolution in every possible way and, at the same time, made a contribution to the annihilation of the Japanese imperialists and the victory against fascism in the Second World War through a joint struggle with the international anti-imperialist forces.

It is precisely because of this that some diplomatic and military documents of the Soviet Union read that we went to the Soviet Union in the summer of 1942 and made preparations for joint military operations to rout the Japanese imperialists.

The great leader recollected as follows the historic necessity of the formation of the IAF, to be composed of some units of the KPRA, the NAJAA and the Soviet Far East Forces, as well as the process of their development.

A great change was taking place in international situation at the time when we established our temporary base in the Soviet Far East region and carried out vigorous small-unit activities in Northeast China and within the homeland.

A neutrality pact was concluded between the Soviet Union and Japan in April 1941.

There had been a deep-rooted antagonism between these two countries since the days of the Russo-Japanese War. There was ample potential danger of this antagonism leading to a new war between them. Nevertheless, they

were carrying on their political and military diplomacy in the direction of avoiding an immediate clash.

Germany and Japan were the most bellicose countries in the world, and the Soviet Union was on the utmost alert against them. The Soviet Union tried in every possible way to prevent an invasion by Hitlerite Germany, that had emerged as the shock force of anti-communism, and concluded a nonaggression treaty with the latter to avoid a possible war, or at least delay it. Then it turned its attention to preventing a Japanese attack. The conclusion of a neutrality pact between the Soviet Union and Japan was the temporary outcome of this policy.

In concluding this treaty, each of the two countries aimed at holding the other side in check. The treaty did not provide a guarantee against a war between the Soviet Union and Japan.

A war broke out between the Soviet Union and Germany in June 1941.

I summoned all the members of the small units and said, "It is not surprising that Germany, which promised nonaggression, has invaded the Soviet Union. Hitler cannot act otherwise. Shaking hands with others when they face them but surprising them behind their backs are the true colours of the imperialists. However, Hitler has made a blunder. By invading the Soviet Union, Germany is digging a grave for Hitler." Then I emphasized that, no matter how the situation changed, we should make full preparations for the final showdown in accordance with our policy.

Owing to fascist Germany's unexpected pre-emptive attack, the military strength of the Soviet Union suffered a grave loss at the beginning of the war, and the Red Army had to retreat temporarily without having the time to reverse the unfavourable tide of war. The German army occupied Kiev, Kharkov and Minsk, one after the other, and closed in upon Moscow and Leningrad.

Later I worked out a plan for our activities to cope with the new situation created by the outbreak of the war between the Soviet Union and Germany. Following this, I went to Khabarovsk and discussed, with military cadres of the Soviet Union and China, the matter of promoting cooperation between the armed forces of the three countries.

In December 1941 the Japanese army unleashed the Pacific War, with a surprise attack on Pearl Harbour, a US naval base in Hawaii.

The outbreak of war between the United States and Japan greatly agitated us because Japan, a party to the war, was an enemy that had occupied our country.

The provocation of a new war by Japan before it had finished the Sino-Japanese War was a rash venture. It was impossible to understand why Japan, an island country, which cannot subsist without bringing such strategic materials as petroleum, rubber, iron and others, from foreign countries, had launched such a strike.

It was self-evident that Japan would squander its national power in the war against the United States.

Anyway, the fact that Japan dashed into a large trap, the Pacific War, of its own accord provided a good opportunity for us Korean revolutionaries to speed up the final showdown.

We foresaw that a war would break out between the Soviet Union and Japan, too, sooner or later. If this happened, Japan would have to fight three major wars at the same time–against China, the United States and the Soviet Union.

In such a case, we would be able to carry out the final operations for national liberation against the Kwantung Army in Manchuria and the Japanese troops stationed in Korea under more favourable circumstances.

Our thoughts were concentrated on how we could defeat the Japanese imperialists and liberate the country even a single day earlier. Needless to say, we had to strengthen our own forces for the final showdown. We could not wait, with arms folded, for others to make a gift of independence for us. The support of friendly nations is effective only when our own forces are strong.

We also made due efforts for solidarity with the international anti-imperialist and anti-fascist forces. In those days the Far East region of the Soviet Union was an important rendezvous for the anti-Japanese forces of three countries–Korea, the Soviet Union and China. In what form and how

we would maintain our relations with the armed forces of the Soviet Union and China was important. This was because the main group of the KPRA was fighting, frequenting the temporary base in the Far East area in company with their comrades-in-arms of the NAJAA. Realizing an effective alliance with the armed forces of the Soviet Union and China was also an important strategic problem in creating the international circumstances needed for strengthening, expanding and consolidating the driving force of our revolution.

By the way, the form of our alliance with these armed forces had to be decided by ourselves to meet the interests of each nation as well as the common interests of the revolution in the three countries.

We had already had the experience of organizing the NAJAA together with the armed units of China and waging a joint struggle while maintaining the identity of the KPRA. The joint struggle waged by the armed forces of Korea and China against the Japanese imperialists, the common enemy of the peoples of the two countries, fully met the objective requirements of the anti-Japanese revolution, not to mention the interests of the revolutions in the two countries. The joint struggle of the communists of Korea and China was a model of bilateral military relations.

Now that the armed forces of Korea and China had another base in the Far East region and, moreover, the Soviet Far East Forces were on our flank, we had to wage our joint anti-Japanese struggle wider and deeper, and develop it to a new stage.

This was not only necessary for the Korean revolution itself, but also conformed to the strategies of China and the Soviet Union as regards Japan.

I regarded the IAF as an ideal form of alliance between the armed forces of Korea, China and the Soviet Union. Kim Chaek, Choe Yong Gon, An Kil, Kang Kon and some other Korean comrades supported my idea of forming the IAF. They unanimously said that the sooner this idea came to fruition the better, and authorized me to discuss the matter with the Soviet and Chinese comrades.

At one time a considerable number of Chinese comrades took a negative

attitude towards the suggestion of the Comintern and the Soviet military authorities to set up a new military system with some of the anti-Japanese armed units in Manchuria and the Soviet Far East Forces, and carry out joint activities, claiming that this was premature. This was due to the fact that some of those in authority on the Soviet side put forward unilateral demands.

Nevertheless, later when we worked out a fully-fledged plan for the formation of the IAF and submitted it for discussion, they broke from their former attitude and were unanimous in admitting that an alliance of the armed forces of the three countries was an urgent task.

The Soviet military authorities also supported the idea.

It was when I met high-ranking Soviet military personnel in Camp South in the spring of 1942 that I had a more detailed discussion with the Soviet side on the formation of the IAF.

That day, General Sorkin, who was in touch with us on behalf of the Comintern and the Soviet military authorities, told us in vivid detail about those who had fought heroically in the battle to defend Moscow and the distinguished military services of the Siberian divisions that had displayed prowess in the defence of Moscow as well as in the counterattack. He also told us proudly about the history of the Soviet Far East Forces. He was extremely proud of the Far East Forces and the Siberian divisions that had taken part in the battle to defend Moscow.

When I proposed my plan for the formation of the IAF, General Sorkin expressed his agreement, saying that it was a very good idea, and that the most appropriate measure needed in the present situation was the organization of the allied forces. He went on, "To tell the truth, I also thought that such a measure would be needed sooner or later. However, I was unsure whether I would gain the understanding and support of the Korean and Chinese comrades, and whether, instead of appreciating this and supporting me, they would perhaps mistake me for a great-power chauvinist. Therefore, I have been hesitating."

I thought there was some profound meaning in what he said. So I said to him: "Winning independence by one's own efforts is our invariable principle.

Nevertheless, this does not exclude international cooperation or alliances with the international revolutionary forces. Why should we oppose internationalism in the true sense of the word, something beneficial both to the revolution in one's own country and the world revolution? In order to defeat Japanese imperialism, a formidable enemy, we should combine our efforts. Even a large country like the Soviet Union should receive assistance from other countries if this is necessary. Receiving help from other countries or fighting in alliance with their revolutionary forces is not flunkeyism. I consider that flunkeyism is an ideological tendency which regards genuine internationalism to be only the idea of receiving assistance from others without believing in one's own strength or only to help the revolution in other countries, while abandoning the revolution in one's own country."

General Sorkin conveyed the content of his talk with me to the Soviet military authorities and the Comintern, and brought up with them the matter of forming the IAF as an urgent matter for discussion.

What situation would be created if the war between the United States and Japan were still continuing after the war between the Soviet Union and Germany ended? Our common opinion was that the Soviet Union would then participate in the war against Japan. Although the Soviet Union had concluded a neutrality pact with Japan, it had to make thoroughgoing preparations for war against that country in case of an emergency. Realizing an alliance with the international anti-Japanese forces was an important policy pursued by the Soviet Union in its preparations for this war.

Thanks to the congruence of the political and military requirements of the Comintern and the Soviet Union itself with our strategic plan, the formation of the IAF was able to proceed comparatively smoothly.

Around mid-July 1942 we held a final discussion on the alliance of the armed forces of Korea, China and the Soviet Union with the military cadres of the Soviet Union and China, and made a decision to establish the IAF on the precondition that the identity of the KPRA and the NAJAA would be preserved.

On July 22, 1942 I met General Apanasenko, Commander of the Soviet

Far East Forces, together with Zhou Bao-zhong and Zhang Shou-jian.

With a roundish oval face and sharp eyes, he was a man of sturdy physique and a veteran general in his fifties. Shaking hands with me, he said he was pleased to meet the Young General of the Korean guerrilla army.

In the office of the Commander we also exchanged greetings with Lieutenant General Nichev, Chief of Staff.

Apanasenko said that the formation of the IAF through the incorporation of the revolutionary armed forces of the Soviet Union, China and Korea would be of great importance not only for the revolutionary struggles of Korea and China, but also for the security of the Soviet Union and its operations against Japan. Then he expressed his confidence that the IAF would fulfil their historic mission successfully.

He went on that the IAF, when formed, would play an important role in training a large number of military cadres needed for the national revolutionary wars in Korea and China, and that the Korean and Chinese units of these forces would constitute a decisive force for the liberation of Korea and Manchuria.

That day Apanasenko reiterated the need to make full preparations to cope with a war at any time, by heightening the intensity of the IAF's training and improving its quality.

He guided us to a room where a large operations map was hanging on the wall.

He said he would like to know about the guerrilla movement conducted by the KPRA and the NAJAA as well as about our plans for future operations, and asked us to explain the military and political situation in Manchuria and Korea.

Zhou Bao-zhong stepped towards the operations map and summed up the activities of the 2nd Route Army of the NAJAA. He also expressed his views with regard to the future operations for the liberation of Northeast China.

At that time I explained the activities of the KPRA and the 1st Route Army of the NAJAA and their actual situation, as well as making clear the military and political problems that had to be taken into consideration

without fail in order to annihilate the Japanese imperialists and liberate Korea.

Apanasenko asked for a detailed explanation of the deployment of the Japanese troops in Korea, the situation of the anti-Japanese forces in Korea itself and of the prospects of their development, as well as of the possibility of joint operations with the Soviet Union.

I gave him detailed information on these points.

Zhang Shou-jian explained the situation of the 3rd Route Army.

Apanasenko was kept comparatively well-informed of the military situation in northern Manchuria.

It was agreed, through our discussion with Apanasenko, that the Soviet side would provide various kinds of weapons and military equipment, clothes, provisions and other supplies for the IAF. Moreover, we decided to call the allied forces the Independent 88th Brigade of the Soviet Far East Forces formally and agreed on calling them Infantry Special Brigade 8461 outside the ranks.

We organized the IAF on a brigade scale on the principle of reduced formation, to keep their existence and activities secret and disguise them thoroughly.

I was in command of the 1st Contingent, composed of the KPRA and the 1st Route Army of the NAJAA.

This contingent was made up mainly of the Korean section of the IAF.

In those days we symbolically fixed the military ranks of the military and political cadres of the KPRA, lower than the actual ones, to protect their personal safety from the espionage and subversive activities of the enemy.

Simultaneously with the formation of the IAF, we all gathered at Camp North.

As a result of the organization of the allied forces, the military and political situations in the Far East region changed in favour of the world revolution.

First of all, the Soviet Union benefited greatly from this. The Soviet Union secured military and political forces capable of coping with the

aggressive moves of Japan on its own initiative, and came to have new special units exclusively serving the military operations in Northeast China and Korea.

The existence of the IAF also created favourable conditions and circumstances for the Korean and Chinese revolutions.

Because it was to act in concert with the Soviet Far East Forces, the KPRA was able to have, within the framework of regular armed forces, the ability as well as the equipment to carry out the most up-to-date operations needed for liberating the country. Moreover, we could make adequate military and political preparations and acquire real power, all needed for accomplishing the task of national liberation on our own, in the Soviet Union until a great event took place.

I met Apanasenko again at the Headquarters of the IAF after their formation. At that time he came to Camp North in the company of the military commissar and other personnel of the general staff, as well as with personnel of the political and supply departments.

The same day, the IAF held a parade. The Korean Contingent stood in the van of the parading ranks. This contingent was good at marching. That day's function could be called a kind of celebration in honour of the birth of the IAF.

In company with Apanasenko, we also took part in a luncheon.

Apanasenko told us about his past life that very day.

He was a veteran fighter who, following the October Revolution, had fought against the White army to defend the Soviet power as well as against the German occupation army. During the Civil War he was already in command of a cavalry division. At one time he was Commander of the Central Asian Military District, before he became Commander of the Far East Forces.

Ever since the early days of the Far East Forces, the Soviet authorities had attached great importance to them. All the commanders of these forces were renowned men of real ability. Many of the successive Ministers of Defence and high-ranking military cadres of the Soviet Union hailed from these forces.

At the beginning of 1943, Apanasenko was transferred to the post of Deputy Commander of the Voronezh front, one of the most important fronts during the war between the Soviet Union and Germany. In the summer of that year he fell in action.

At the news of his death, all the officers and men of the IAF gathered and looked back in grief, upon the memory of this man who had given support and help to the Korean and Chinese communists.

The love of communists for their comrades-in-arms transcends nationality.

In those days we regarded the crisis of the Soviet people as our own national crisis. I still remember how a large number of officers and men from the KPRA and the NAJAA petitioned to be allowed to go to the western front when the Soviet army was in a dire situation there. Nevertheless, each time the Comintern and the Soviet authorities turned down their petition, saying that these soldiers had an important historic task to liberate their own countries.

We ardently defended and valued the Soviet Union, the citadel of socialism and our only bastion. At that time all communists thought that if the Soviet Union collapsed, socialism would also be ruined and it would be impossible to defend world peace.

The biographical dictionaries of many countries claim that I took part in the fierce battle to defend Stalingrad, commanding a large unit composed of Koreans, and was awarded the Order of the Red Flag for my exploits in that battle. Some articles claim that my unit was active in the first line in the operation to capture Berlin.

I was awarded the Order of the Red Flag from the Soviet Government, but I did not take part either in the Battle of Stalingrad or in the capture of Berlin. I don’t know where the authors of the dictionaries got such materials. But anyway, it is true that those articles reflect something of the climate in the training base, seething with enthusiasm to join the war.

The existence of the IAF struck terror into the hearts of the Japanese imperialists who were afraid of the alliance between the armed forces of

Korea, the Soviet Union and China. Conversely, it gave unbounded confidence to our people.

The enemy produced numerous materials with regard to the fact that the great leader set up a training base in the Soviet Union and made preparations for the final operations against Japan. They read in part:

"Kim Il Sung's movements:

"Kim Il Sung, now staying in the Soviet Union, left Khabarovsk last summer and went to Yanan. There he met such leaders of the CPC as Mao Ze-dong, He Long and Kang Sheng, and held a number of discussions with them on the cooperation between the Army of the CPC and the Anti-Japanese Allied Army, before and after the outbreak of the war between Japan and the Soviet Union, as well as on the future activities of the Anti-Japanese Allied Army. Then he met a Korean CPC member in the vicinity of Yanan, and they exchanged opinions on various matters.

"Towards the end of last year, Kim Il Sung returned to the Soviet Union from Yanan by air. He is now in the neighbourhood of Khabarovsk and devoting himself to intelligence and ideological work regarding Manchuria and Korea. Moreover, it is said that he has admitted about 300 people, including Korean and Chinese communist bandits, and Korean and Manchurian recalcitrants and captives who had entered the Soviet Union, to the training camp in the vicinity of Khabarovsk and, under the guidance and with the help of the Khabarovsk Red Army, is giving training and education to them so that they will be able to enter Manchuria all together before and after the beginning of the war between Japan and the Soviet Union, and carry out the task of harassing the rear of the Japanese army." (Information sent by the chief of the Namyang police station to the chief of the police department of North Hamgyong Province, February 21, Showa 19 (1944).)

"Kim Il Sung is said to be in Yanan now and sending troops to Rehe Province. Moreover, there are four divisions formed entirely of Koreans in Nikolayevski (in the Maritime Province of Siberia). When a war breaks out between Japan and the Soviet Union, these troops will land in the area of north Korea as a death-defying corps or descend on Korea by parachute." (A file of cases (4) on seditious actions for harassing the rear and staging an armed uprising during the Great East Asia War, centring around graduates of Kyongsong University, Kowon police station, Showa 20 (1945).)

"It seems that a man who came back across Siberia has said that there is an encampment

four kilometres in circumference in one place in Siberia, and that there is a Korean flag flying there, and that he has seen Korean soldiers guarding it." *(Monthly Report by the Special Political Police*, p. 79, Security Police Bureau, Ministry of the Interior, Showa 19 (1944).)

The news of the formation of the IAF exerted a favourable influence on the anti-Japanese patriotic forces fighting in Northeast China. Many times the soldiers of the NAJAA in Manchuria crossed the river and joined the allied forces in groups of two or three. Sometimes soldiers of the puppet Manchukuo army rose in revolt against the officers and joined the allied forces.

Once, I cannot remember whether it was before or after the organization of the allied forces, one company of a regiment of the puppet Manchukuo army stationed in Donganzhen, Raohe County, executed their commander and Japanese officers, and crossed the Ussuri River in a wooden boat bringing with them a large number of rifles, machine-guns, grenade throwers and other weapons. We warmly welcomed them and enlisted them.

Following the formation of the IAF, we intensified combat and political training, and accelerated preparations for our operations against Japan.

The most important task confronting us in those days was to consolidate the ranks of the KPRA politically and militarily.

It can be said that the fundamental principles of military operations are identical for any kind of war, be it an ancient war, a mediaeval war or a modern war. What is important is how to have a command of the means of war as they develop and how to organize cooperation and joint operations between various services and arms.

We made serious efforts to master modern tactics, and our efforts were redoubled following the formation of the IAF. The capability of the soldiers of the KPRA for using modern tactics freely was raised to a considerable level through training and studying at the training base.

At the same time as perfecting the guerrilla tactics which they had practised on the wide plateau around Mt. Paektu, they familiarized themselves with modern tactics to meet the requirements of a regular army.

By doing so, they admirably played their political and military roles as the main force of the Korean revolution.

The Soviet Far East Forces also made great efforts for the rapid improvement of the fighting efficiency of the IAF.

Around mid-November 1942, Apanasenko organized a military exercise of a brigade of the Soviet Far East Forces stationed in the south, and invited the leading commanders of the allied forces to inspect it.

That day we went from Khabarovsk to that brigade in an armoured train. On the following day, the brigade held a winter exercise. A large number of armed forces including four infantry battalions as well as tank, artillery, mortar, signal and anti-tank gun battalions took part in the exercise.

It was the military exercise of a large scale we had ever seen, so it aroused our curiosity and interest.

The task given to the brigade was to attack and annihilate the enemy on a hill and capture the hill. The attack, which started at noon, was over only at four o'clock in the afternoon.

Later, we also inspected the military exercise of another brigade stationed on the Amur River in the suburbs of Khabarovsk.

The brigade was assigned the task of mustering the unit around a village called Belizovka and getting ready for battle. That exercise, too, left a deep impression on us.

In Khabarovsk we also inspected a parade of the units of the Far East Forces. I quite envied the various kinds of modern military equipment and combat material that had been mobilized for the military exercises and parade. "When shall we be able to have such a modernized army?" This is what I thought of most during my inspection of the military exercises and parade. My resolve to build a regular army immediately after liberating the country was strengthened during my stay at the training base in the Far East region.

Thanks to the serious efforts of and cooperation between the military commanders of Korea, the Soviet Union and China, the IAF were able to develop, in a short time, into armed forces capable of coping with modern warfare.

Even when the Soviet Union badly needed the strength of another single regiment or a single battalion because of the extremely difficult situation at the front, it never touched the allied forces, but helped them so that they could make full preparations for the showdown against the Japanese imperialists.

Soviet military personnel frequently told us about how much Stalin valued the officers and men of the KPRA and the NAJAA. They told that Stalin had said that all the soldiers of these armies were valuable people who would make a major contribution to liberating their own motherlands and building a new country, and that, therefore, they should take care of these soldiers lest there should be a single loss.

The formation and development of the IAF in the Soviet Far East region served as a good model for uniting the resistance forces of Czechoslovakia and Poland in Europe.

Simultaneously with the conclusion of the Treaty of Friendship and Mutual Cooperation between the Soviet Union and Czechoslovakia in 1943, a unit of Czechoslovaks was organized in the territory of the Soviet Union to take part in the joint struggle against Hitlerite Germany, together with the Red Army. The Czechoslovak brigade took part in a number of military operations such as the battles to liberate Kiev and Belaya Serkovi, and made many brilliant achievements.

Poland also created, in the territory of the Soviet Union, an army to fight against fascist Germany. The Polish corps participated in a series of military operations to liberate Poland from the claws of the German fascist occupationists, beginning with the battle to liberate Lublin.

The news of the dissolution of the Comintern reached the training base in May 1943, when we were active in the Soviet Union following the formation of the IAF. People at the base wondered why the Comintern, which had existed for over 20 years as the leading organ of the world revolution, had been dissolved in the middle of the Second World War, when international solidarity and cooperation were most urgent for a showdown against fascism.

It was in 1919 that Lenin organized the Comintern. I think there were two reasons for its dissolution: One was that, while the Comintern was leading the

world revolution, in various countries communist parties and revolutionary forces grew so strong that they were able to promote revolution in their own countries independently in accordance with their own line and relying on their own efforts, even without its centralist leadership and involvement.

Another reason was that the existence of the Comintern was an obstacle to realizing a more extensive, worldwide anti-fascist alliance. The anti-fascist alliance during the Second World War was a new aspect which transcended differences in ideas and social systems. The stand which transcended ideas and systems and was taken by the countries forming the alliance in the confrontation with fascism made possible the alliance between the Soviet Union, a socialist country, and the United States, Britain and France, capitalist countries, as well as the cooperation between communists and bourgeois Right-wing politicians. This situation made them reconsider the existence of the Comintern, the mission of which was to oppose imperialism and to communize the world.

We admitted that the dissolution of the Comintern was an opportune measure which fully conformed with the requirements of the international communist movement and the development of the situation prevailing at that time.

We felt great pride in the fact that, from the outset of our struggle, we had done everything independently at every revolutionary stage, adopting our own strategy and tactics and building the revolutionary force by our own efforts instead of by relying on the strength or line of others.

The dissolution of the Comintern, however, did not imply the demise of international solidarity and cooperation among communists.

We continued to adhere to the independence of our activities within the IAF, but we still strengthened solidarity and cooperation with our foreign friends as ever.

The military and political activities conducted by the great leader Comrade Kim Il Sung with the Soviet Union as the stage were a matter of great international concern. The Japanese military, police and intelligence service obstinately attempted to spy on the movements, organizational structure and activities of the KPRA.

Extremely nervous over the disorganization of the Comintern, the Japanese imperialists formed various judgments and speculations concerning the future trend of the policy of the communist movement in Korea and, in particular, the activities of the great leader Comrade Kim Il Sung.

Following is a paragraph from *Dissolution of the Comintern and Prospects* published by the Japanese imperialists:

"Korea is a colony of the Japanese Empire. Therefore, its immediate strategic objective will be to defeat Japan in the current war, and win national liberation and independence above all else. With regard to the task of the armed struggle, the activities of the Korean volunteers under the leadership of communist bandit Kim Il Sung in Manchuria or the CPC are the expression of this policy. The present movement in Korea will be dependent on the relations between Japan and the Soviet Union. The situation will change suddenly and result in a head-on clash between these two countries. It is evident, from the example of the countries occupied by Germany, our ally, that in the latter case the movement will degenerate rapidly into terrorist activities or assume the form of an armed struggle." (Continued Issue of *Thought Bulletin*, p. 131, the Ideological Department of the Criminal Bureau of the High Court, October, Showa 18 (1943).)

The Japanese imperialists could not but admit that the communist movement and the national liberation movement in Korea, being the struggles of the Korean people themselves, would display the characteristic of independence, irrespective of the existence or dissolution of the Comintern, and that the armed struggle led by the great leader would become a very great force when it was allied with the international anti-imperialist forces.

The strenuous efforts exerted by the Korean communists for the organization, strengthening and development of the IAF serve as a model of correct combination of two principles–the principle of the independence and identity of each country and that of international solidarity and cooperation in the revolutionary struggle.

The success and experience gained in those days when we organized and strengthened the IAF became a valuable asset for us in keeping and expanding the united front with the socialist countries and other international revolutionary forces maintaining the Juche stand in the complex political situation following the war, not to speak of the days of final showdown to annihilate the Japanese imperialists.

# 7. With My Comrades-in-Arms of the Northeast Anti-Japanese Allied Army

During my days in the IAF I was in close contact with and in the same ranks as Zhou Bao-zhong, Zhang Shou-jian, Chai Shi-rong, Feng Zhong-yun and many other comrades-in-arms of the NAJAA. A long time has passed since then, but I still remember what happened in those days.

Zhou Bao-zhong was in the most frequent contact with me of all the commanders of the NAJAA. My intimate friendship with him started in the first half of the 1930s, when we were working for a united front with the National Salvation Army in Jiandao. I worked with him on the Anti-Japanese Soldiers Committee and together we fought the Luozigou Battle. When we were in Wangqing, we conducted two expeditions to northern Manchuria and each time we carried out joint operations with Zhou Bao-zhong's unit. However, I lost contact with him after we moved the theatre of our activities to the area of Mt. Paektu and West Jiandao in the latter half of the 1930s.

"There are many roads, but one gate." Zhou Bao-zhong always quoted this maxim whenever he parted from me. This implied that, though the theatres of our activities and the courses of our struggle were different, we were sure to meet again some time, for we were both fighting against the Japanese.

When he met me just before the Khabarovsk conference, he said, "You see, Commander Kim, what did I say? Didn't I say there are many roads, but one gate?" and burst out laughing. My meeting with him moved me deeply, for it was effected after the interval of several years.

"Since I heard the news of Commander Yang's death, I've always been worried about the personal safety of my comrades in southern Manchuria. I

heard the Japanese imperialists had put a large price on your head, Commander Kim, but you've admirably overcome critical moments. I know well that southern and eastern Manchuria are very dangerous theatres of war. I am delighted to see you alive and well here in Khabarovsk. I've anxiously waited for your arrival," Zhou Bao-zhong said with great sincerity.

He looked much older than before. His face vividly betrayed the hardships and sufferings he had undergone in the vast forests and snow-covered plains.

When I told him that he must have had a very hard time, he said, "Our hardships are nothing. They can't be compared with those experienced by our comrades in southern Manchuria. We wholeheartedly admire you for having won victory after victory without yielding to such great hardships. The people at the Comintern and commanders of the Soviet army also praise you very highly."

At this time the Comintern was hurrying to begin the meeting of the commanders of the guerrilla army in Northeast China and the representatives of the Soviet Far East Forces. Therefore, Zhou and I largely talked about matters concerning the meeting.

Zhou Bao-zhong's ideological problem was how to combine the national and international duties of the revolution, as well as independence and international solidarity in the revolutionary struggle. He eagerly desired to have contact with the Central Committee of the CPC, but he was anxious because he could not do so. It was natural that he, a member of the CPC, had taken pains for many years to develop the revolution in Northeast China under the guidance of the Party Central Committee.

Zhou always gave priority to contact with the Central Committee of the CPC and strove to achieve solidarity with the Soviet Union. This was the general attitude of the Chinese comrades fighting in Northeast China.

At one time the Comintern and the Soviet military authorities had wanted to put the NAJAA under the command of the Soviet Union. Therefore, it was understandable that Zhou Bao-zhong worried that they might try to do so again.

That day Zhou and I reached a consensus: Military and political

cooperation and assistance between us and the Soviet Union were urgently needed in view of the prevailing situation. However, the specific form and method of the cooperation and assistance should be settled by properly combining the interests of the revolution in each country with those of the world revolution. In other words, they should be realized by way of maintaining the independence of the NAJAA and the KPRA.

Winding up our talk, Zhou said, "I believe that the speech of the representatives of southern Manchuria will be very important at the forthcoming negotiations. I have complete trust in you, Comrade Kim. In the days of the Anti-Japanese Soldiers Committee, too, you gave the keynote speech each time, didn't you, Commander Kim? Let us work in the future, as in the past, joining our efforts to meet the new situation." He sincerely trusted me.

Zhou defended the Soviet Union and always supported the socialist system established there. Nevertheless, he was extremely displeased with the slightest expression of chauvinism in the speech or behaviour of people in that country, or in the way they dealt with matters.

I told him that if he, while strictly adhering to the principle, displayed the spirit of comradely cooperation with generosity, he would be fully able to help them correct their misguided attitude and solve such knotty problems in time.

Zhou nodded and said, "You are really experienced, Commander Kim." I replied, "It's not that I am so experienced, but that you lack one type of experience. You've not shared lodgings with others as we did." To this he said, "That's right. You Korean comrades underwent great hardships in eastern Manchuria because of the 'Minsaengdan' problem."

Already when he was active in Jidong, Zhou criticized the anti-"Minsaengdan" struggle for having been conducted in an ultra-Leftist way and blamed the East Manchuria Special District Party Committee for this because, he asserted, this was due to its error. Since his days in Jiandao, he had been taking a comparatively fair attitude towards the struggle of the Korean revolutionaries.

I mentioned earlier the fact that, following our formation of the ARF, Zhou actively backed the activities of a branch of this association organized in a unit of the NAJAA under his command. This happened in December 1936. His attitude was an expression of international support for and solidarity with the Korean revolution.

Zhou's friendly attitude towards the Korean revolution can be attributed to the fact that we had helped him with sincerity from the first days of the guerrilla movement and exerted a favourable influence on him through a number of joint operations.

During the first expedition to northern Manchuria we helped him by transferring the majority of the expeditionary force to his unit. At that time we conducted a number of joint operations with our comrades in northern Manchuria.

During the second expedition to northern Manchuria we organized the joint general headquarters of the 2nd and 5th Corps and carried out large-scale joint operations. Zhou Bao-zhong was the commander, I, the political commissar and Ping Nan-yang (Li Jing-pu), the deputy commander. The six units under the general headquarters were each assigned to their respective areas of operations. Zhou Bao-zhong was in charge of the Antu unit in the west, and I took charge of the Weihe unit.

We organized a headquarters for each region, such as the headquarters of the western front and those of the central front. We attached a number of units to these headquarters and carried out joint operations in the area between Fusong and Muling.

Such were the close relations between Zhou Bao-zhong and me. Probably because of these ties, in the days of the IAF Zhou discussed with me all problems, both major and minor. Even when he had some problem to discuss with Soviet people, he first asked my opinion. When I asked why he did so, he replied that this was because he had been accustomed to listening to my advice since his days in Jiandao.

In the days of the IAF, Zhou, regardless of the differences in our ranks, always respected me as the Commander of the KPRA, the leader of the

Korean revolution and the representative of the Korean side in the allied forces. We worked in concert, supporting and helping each other like the cochairmen of some organizations usually did, because we respected each other. The relations between Zhou and me were comradely and fraternal ones based on deep respect and trust.

I had a good impression of Zhou mainly because he, more than any one else, highly appreciated the exploits of the Korean communists and other Korean people who had played the role of vanguards in pioneering and developing the revolution in Northeast China.

Once he said that there were two things that he could never forget. One of them was that it was Koreans who played a vanguard role in the anti-Japanese guerrilla struggle.

His attitude to the Korean revolution was clear. He regarded it as natural for the Koreans to fight for the Korean revolution, and always asserted that the revolution in Northeast China would have been inconceivable without the Koreans.

He said that the KPRA was the 2nd Corps of the NAJAA, and always extolled the alliance between the anti-Japanese armed forces of Korea and China that existed in the course of their common struggle.

Pointing out the vanguard role played by the Korean communists in the revolution in Northeast China, Zhou Bao-zhong said, "The strong guerrilla army in eastern Manchuria built in 1932 and the guerrilla armies in Panshi, Zhuhe, Mishan, Tangyuan and Raohe established in 1933 were all founded by the Korean comrades and the revolutionary masses of Korea. In later days they developed into the 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 6th and 7th Corps of the Anti-Japanese Allied Army. There were many fine Korean comrades in the 5th Corps, too. The leading military and political cadres at various levels of all the corps of the Anti-Japanese Allied Army, such as commanders of corps, chiefs of political departments, platoon leaders and instructors, were all Korean comrades."

The following letters Zhou sent to Wang Xin-lin clearly show how much he respected and how highly he appreciated the great leader. They read in part:

"Kim Il Sung is the best military cadre ... and the finest of all the Korean comrades. He can carry out very important activities in the southern part of Manchuria, in the eastern region of the Amnok River and in the northern area of Korea." (Zhou Bao-zhong to Wang Xin-lin, July 1, Juche 30 (1941).)

"Kim Il Sung is now the only important cadre in the 1st Route Army in southern Manchuria. After the death of Yang Jing-yu and Wei Zheng-min, Kim Il Sung alone continues to shoulder the responsibility for the leadership of the guerrilla movement in southern Manchuria and for all affairs concerning southern Manchuria as a whole." (Zhou Bao-zhong to Wang Xin-lin, September 15, Juche 30 (1941).)

What I regarded as another good thing in Zhou Bao-zhong was the fact that he always adhered to principles in the revolutionary struggle and fervently championed the revolution in his own country. He did not tolerate the tendency to subordinate the Chinese revolution to the revolution in the Soviet Union or make it the latter's appendage. He stood for solidarity with the Soviet revolution and for the defence of the Soviet Union based on proletarian internationalism, but he always maintained the independence of the Chinese revolution and its independent development.

Zhou's principled stand towards the revolution was identical with ours. My view is that the worth of a revolutionary is directly proportional to the firmness of his independent stand towards the revolution. The firmer his independent stand, the higher his prestige is. When our independence is unshakable, the revolution is ever-victorious.

In the days of the IAF, Zhou Bao-zhong always called me Commander Kim. However, when he came to Pyongyang following Korea's liberation, he never called me that. Although he asked me to call him Commander Zhou in a familiar way, as in former days, he always called me Comrade Premier.

I requested that he call me Commander Kim as before, because I was not accustomed somehow to being called Comrade Premier and also because I thought that by this we might create an unnecessary estrangement. However, each time he would stiffen his expression and say, "No, I shouldn't."

Sometimes Zhou and I argued. Once he persisted in his own opinion it

was not easy to exact a concession from him, for he was so obstinate. I did not concede readily, either. Nevertheless, in the long run we would reach a consensus, regulating our assertions and supplementing one man's view with the other's opinion. In this way our friendship became firm and we came to understand each other more fully.

Zhou and I frequently had private talks, too. Zhou's main topics of conversation were his family and comrades. He had a little daughter whose name was Zhou Wei. She was born when he had already reached the age of 40, so he loved her very much. The more she frolicked, the greater was his pride in telling me about her. Each time he boasted about her, there was the pleasant smile of a happy father on his face.

Zhou and his wife, Wang Yi-zhi, served in the same unit for a long time. They were married in the thick forests of northern Manchuria.

Whenever Zhou talked about his wife and daughter, his eyes became bright. He was fond of private talks. Sometimes he advanced his opinion about the peculiar way of life of the Nanay people residing in the neighbourhood of his unit or about a Russian couple in a boarding house in Khabarovsk. His powers of observation and description were admirable.

Once he told me about the cockfight holiday which was celebrated in his native village in Yunnan Province. According to him, in his home province people dressed themselves in new clothes on February 8 by the lunar calendar, and held cockfighting competitions in the streets. The people of that region adored chickens. According to a legend, their ancestors became prosperous by raising chickens. There was even a saying that they maintained their families by relying on chickens.

Zhou said that, though they could not rely on chickens to tide over the national crisis, he would be as brave as a fighting cock in repulsing the enemy.

He looked taciturn and blunt, but was kindhearted and faithful to his obligations. He knew how to show good will to a man of good will and offer sympathy to a sympathetic man. The latter half of his life shows this clearly.

He took particular trouble with his work in the IAF for many years. He

strove with devotion for the development of the Chinese revolution, but he was always faithful to his internationalist duty. If he had ignored his duty to the world revolution, attaching importance only to the revolution in his own country, or if he had remained indifferent to the latter, talking bombastically about the former, he would not have deserved lengthy recollection.

Whenever Zhou Bao-zhong dispatched small units to Northeast China to maintain a strong life-line for the guerrilla movement, I felt he was a true son of the Chinese people. And whenever I saw him striving for the friendship and solidarity of the various national units within the allied forces as well as for the defence of the Soviet Union, I realized he was a genuine internationalist fighter.

He was efficient in managing the ranks and economic life of the IAF. There were many complex problems in the allied forces, an aggregation of different national units. He was involved in almost everything, ranging from the formulation of the training programme, the guidance of the training and personnel matters to the construction of a club.

One day a deserter was a source of his worry, and another day he was bathed with sweat because of a traffic accident.

In the early days following the formation of the IAF, he had some trouble because some Soviet officers would not cooperate with him. However, the strict demands on the part of the Soviet military authorities completely changed the Soviet officers' attitudes.

Zhou Bao-zhong always strove to lead his men by personal example.

When parachute training was held in Camp North, he took part in it in company with his men from the first day. One day he nearly lost his life when his parachute failed to open. Fortunately, his backup parachute opened, and he escaped with only a shoulder injury.

Once some Chinese comrades requested me to advise Zhou not to parachute any more, but I did not do so for I knew too well that such advice would fall on deaf ears.

In the spring of 1951 Wang Yi-zhi, the then chief of the Women's Federation of Yunnan Province, came to see me at the Supreme Headquarters

during her visit to Pyongyang as a member of a group of sympathizers. Seeing me, she shed tears, saying that she was glad to find me healthy despite the fact that I was shouldering the heavy burden of the hard-fought war. Then she said, “Bao-zhong begs you never to go to the dangerous front, but take the utmost care of your personal safety.”

I was grateful to Zhou for this, so I said to Wang: “Convey my thanks to Commander Zhou upon your return, please.”

Wang Yi-zhi replied, “This is Bao-zhong’s request and, at the same time, mine. We Chinese are now greatly concerned about your personal safety, Comrade Premier.” According to her, in the days of the IAF, too, Zhou Bao-zhong could not bring himself to go to bed and was worried about me, going in and out of his room all night, if I did not return from my small-unit activities on schedule. Our friendship transcended borders and nationalities.

The great leader parted with Zhou Bao-zhong at a new turning-point in our history, when the anti-Japanese revolution emerged victorious and the colonial rule of the Japanese imperialists was abolished. Nevertheless, fellowship and visits full of militant friendship continued between the two in later years.

In recollecting how his intimate friendship with Zhou Bao-zhong continued after liberation, the respected leader Comrade Kim Il Sung said:

After liberation I met Zhou Bao-zhong on several occasions, twice in our country and for the last time in Beijing.

Zhou paid his first visit to our country in the early spring of 1946. I met him in Namyang. At that time he was fighting against the Kuomintang reactionaries as deputy commander-in-chief of the Northeast Democratic Allied Army (NDAA) and commander of the Jilin-Liaoning military district.

As Jiang Jie-shi, in his opposition to the communists, attacked the liberated area by mobilizing all the troops of the Kuomintang army, the mainland of China was again drawn into the vortex of a civil war. Saying that the situation in Northeast China was very critical, Zhou explained to me the balance of power between friend and foe as well as the military and political situation.

After the Japanese imperialists were forced out, there was a political vacuum in Manchuria for some time. Jiang Jie-shi's Kuomintang and the CPC waged a fierce struggle to control this area. Both of them regarded Manchuria as a pivotal region for the seizure of the whole of Chinese territory.

The newly-formed NDAA had to fight hard against a formidable enemy as the Kuomintang, with the active backing of the United States, hurled hundreds of thousands of troops by sea, air and land into Manchuria.

Zhou Bao-zhong wanted to meet me in order to request urgent assistance to cope with this situation. It was also around that time that Mao Ze-dong sent Chen Yun to Pyongyang to request our support. Chen had for some time been chief of the organization department of the Central Committee of the CPC, and had then been appointed deputy secretary of its Northeast Bureau.

I readily promised Zhou Bao-zhong that we would help solve all the problems raised by our Chinese comrades-in-arms with regard to the operations to be conducted in Northeast China, and render them the utmost assistance. Actually, our situation in those days did not enable us to extend help to others. Nevertheless, we did not take our conditions into consideration at all. From the point of view of our revolution, too, we could not tolerate Northeast China falling under the rule of Jiang Jie-shi.

In those days some 250,000 young Koreans were directly taking part in the battles to liberate Northeast China. Among them were Kang Kon, Pak Rak Kwon and Choe Kwang, the finest military and political cadres of the anti-Japanese guerrilla army.

Wang Yi-zhi also visited our country on a number of occasions bringing Zhou Bao-zhong's requests concerning the operations to liberate Northeast China. Her first visit was either in the summer or autumn of 1946. At that time the NDAA unit of the Liaodong military district led by Xiao Hua attacked Anshan and Haicheng. Simultaneously with this attack, a unit of the Kuomintang army stationed in these areas rose in revolt.

Greatly startled at the news, Jiang Jie-shi launched a violent offensive, threatening to annihilate the unit unless it capitulated. The unit retreated to

the border between Korea and China. However, they could not move farther because the Amnok River blocked their way.

Zhou Bao-zhong sent Chinese representatives to our country one after another to discuss the measures to rescue the rebel unit. Wang Yi-zhi also visited Ranam as one of those representatives. In the end, we allowed the unit to enter eastern Manchuria via our territory.

It was in early 1947 that I met Wang Yi-zhi in Pyongyang. On behalf of Zhou Bao-zhong, she first thanked me for helping them in various ways in the operations to liberate Northeast China. Then she said, "We have to evacuate wounded soldiers, families of soldiers and service personnel numbering over 20,000, as well as strategic materials amounting to 20,000 tons, to a safe place. To this end, we again request passage through Korean territory. We need your help, General Kim."

I readily complied with her request, and saw that relevant measures were taken immediately. Wang Yi-zhi repeatedly expressed her gratitude, saying, "All the people in Northeast China will remember your favour, General Kim."

The same day I asked Wang Yi-zhi whether she still had with her the watch Rim Chun Chu had given her as a souvenir when we parted with her in the Far East region. She said with a smile that she had given it to a man from the Soviet Union.

I could not understand why she had given away the watch she had called a symbol of friendship between Korea and China, and which she had said she would wear until her dying day.

As a matter of fact, the watch was Rim Chun Chu's favourite. The day we were leaving the training base, Zhou Bao-zhong and Wang Yi-zhi did not let us go easily, expressing deep regret at our parting.

That was when Rim Chun Chu gave his wristwatch to Wang Yi-zhi. At first, she was unwilling to take it, as in those days a watch was a rare treasure. I told her to take the watch, saying it would prove its worth some time in the future. Only then did Wang accept the watch.

She related how they had seized the Changchun radio station after the

liberation of the city, and that she had been in charge of broadcasting and had also taken part in the transportation of weapons from time to time. She added that the watch had been of great help to her. According to her, when they were engaged in the transportation of weapons, a motor transport convoy of the Soviet army had given them a great deal of help. She said she had given the watch to the leader of the transport convoy as a souvenir.

Wang Yi-zhi said the watch had, in the final analysis, become a symbol of the militant friendship between the peoples of China, Korea and the Soviet Union.

At that time we did not let her return straightaway to Northeast China, but got her to rest for some time because she was not in good health. During her stay in Korea, she toured Moran Hill and some other places in Pyongyang.

In later days, too, Wang Yi-zhi came to Pyongyang to solve the difficult problems in the transport of strategic materials. Wang Xiao-ming and Peng Shi-lu were also staying in Pyongyang around that time. The three of them enjoyed a touching reunion as comrades-in-arms from the days of the IAF.

I think it was probably in the summer of 1947 that Zhou Bao-zhong sent Wang Yi-zhi to me again. The NDAA had killed or wounded 80,000 enemy soldiers and liberated 42 cities and towns in battles that lasted for 50 days. However, the situation at the front was still tense at that time. The officers and men of the democratic allied army had great difficulty because of a shortage of shoes. Wang said that a large number of the officers and men were marching barefoot through mud and gravelly places. She came to see me in order to solve the problem of shoes.

I gave an emergency order to all the shoe factories to discontinue the production of other shoes but make only those to be sent to our Chinese comrades-in-arms.

According to Chinese information on the operations to liberate Northeast China, our country carried, for the NDAA, materials amounting to 210,000 tons in the first seven months of Juche 36 (1947) and in the following year it transported 300,900 tons of materials.

A total of 18 NDAA units passed through Korean territory in the latter half of Juche 35

(1946), and the number of NDAA personnel who went to the base in Northeast China via Korea during the first nine months of Juche 36 (1947) amounted to more than 10,000. Nearly 9,000 people crossed the Tuman River via a bridge at Namyang in Juche 37 (1948) to go to Northeast China. Moreover, a number of representatives of Chinese democratic parties, non-party representatives and those of overseas Chinese went to Harbin via Korea to take part in the new political consultative conference. It is said that the number of cadres of the CPC who passed through Korea on business was even higher.

In the autumn of 1948, immediately after the liberation of Northeast China, Zhou Bao-zhong visited our country again in the capacity of chairman of the Jilin provincial government and concurrently deputy commander-in-chief of the Northeast China military district, accompanied by Wang Yi-zhi and his daughter Zhou Wei. He paid that visit to express his gratitude to us for offering material and moral aid to them in the operations to liberate Northeast China. The large amount of flour Zhou brought with him by train at that time was part of the expression of his thanks.

I sent Zhou and his wife to Mt. Kumgang, with Kim Chaek as a guide and companion. The couple enjoyed themselves at the hot spring rest home in the mountains for some time. Upon their return from Mt. Kumgang, they expressed their delight and admiration at the autumnal tints.

Upon their return to Pyongyang, still accompanied by Kim Chaek, they visited Mangyongdae as well as the graves of my father and mother.

After that, Kim Jong Suk and I took them to visit An Kil's grave and posed with them for a souvenir photograph.

Even now, when I recollect Zhou Bao-zhong, I look back upon what happened once during the second stage of the Fatherland Liberation War. This took place when we started our temporary retreat.

One day two strange young men came to see me and gave me a letter from Zhou Bao-zhong. They were Koreans named Hyon Ju Yong and Kim Kil Ryong. They had been working as Zhou's aide and driver, respectively, since the time he took command of the operations to liberate Northeast China. Zhou had taken them with him when he was moved to the post of vice-chairman of

the Yunnan provincial government. They said that at the news of the People's Army retreating, Zhou had urged them to go to Korea without delay.

In his letter, Zhou Bao-zhong wrote that although he was far away, he was always in a Korean trench in his mind and that he entrusted to me two young men, who were intelligent and had a high sense of responsibility. Zhou's letter really gave me great strength at a time when the country was undergoing a severe trial.

Friendship between revolutionary comrades is just like this. The militant friendship and comradeship we showed each other with pure hearts in Jiandao and northern Manchuria, as well as at the training base in the Far East region, could not change no matter how much time passed.

Love for comrades-in-arms is rock-solid. This is because it has been cultivated amid gun smoke and because it encourages people even to plunge into fire and sacrifice their lives for the sake of their comrades.

Being loyal to his obligations is really noble for a man. Because of loyalty man becomes a noble being, and because of faithfulness human life becomes as beautiful as a flower garden.

I met Zhou Bao-zhong for the last time during my visit to China in December 1954. At that time he was recuperating in the Jieshou Hall in the Summer Palace, because his chronic heart disease had become worse. He said Premier Zhou En-lai had ensured that he was brought to Beijing and given medical treatment there.

Upon seeing me, Zhou embraced me with tear-filled eyes. That iron man shed tears continually on that day. His mind seemed to have become very feeble, probably because he was bedridden. Nevertheless, he first inquired after my health and said that I must have had a very hard time during the three years of war.

Zhou did not discontinue literary work even on his sickbed, and left behind him a thick book entitled *The Anti-Japanese Guerrilla Warfare in Northeast China and the Anti-Japanese Allied Army*. He passed away in February 1964 after a prolonged illness, ten years after our meeting in the Summer Palace.

On the day when I sent a telegram of condolence, I could not bring myself to work. Unable to do anything, I recollected Zhou Bao-zhong pacing up and down my office.

In the days of the IAF I also met Chai Shi-rong again. I still vividly remember how he hugged me tightly and called me “Old Kim”, “Old Kim”, and rubbed his rough cheek against mine. He was about 20 years older than I, and so I asked him if, by addressing me as a senior, he intended to make me, Kim Il Sung, an old man, and exploded with laughter. To this he said, “Age doesn’t matter, because you, Commander Kim, are a senior who led me to become a communist.”

Chai Shi-rong’s real name was Chai Zhao-sheng. He said he had been chief of a police station somewhere in Helong County before the Japanese army conquered Manchuria. When the September 18 incident occurred, he organized a small armed unit with other policemen and rose against Manchukuo and the Japanese.

I became acquainted with Chai Shi-rong in 1933, when he was commanding a unit of the National Salvation Army in the area of Wangqing. Following our success in realizing cooperation with Wu Yi-cheng’s unit, we had gone to meet Chai Shi-rong, but did not succeed in the negotiations with him at that time. Nevertheless, in later years Chai Shi-rong allied with the communists. Eventually, he became a communist and established a close friendship with me. We jointly waged the battle of the Dongning County town and the Luozigou Battle.

In later days, Chai Shi-rong moved the theatre of his activities to northern Manchuria and became commander of the 5th Corps of the NAJAA. During our second expedition to northern Manchuria, we conducted a number of joint operations with his unit. At that time Chai Shi-rong was in command of the headquarters of the central front. Our joint operations were conducted in the areas of Emu and Ningan.

Respecting me as a revolutionary senior, Chai was always deferential in my presence. Whenever this happened, I felt his noble personality. After the formation of the IAF, I and Chai Shi-rong were put in command

of the 1st Contingent and the 4th Contingent, respectively.

Now Chai Shi-rong has also become a man of the old times. I do not know in which year he passed away. When I look at the photo I had taken with Chai at the training base in the Far East region, I still feel deep emotions. It is a vivid picture which shows how communist ideology transformed a man.

Once Hu Zhen-yi, widow of Chai Shi-rong, visited Pyongyang with her son. She had gone to the training base after serving for some time in the 5th Corps of the NAJAA.

When grey-haired Hu Zhen-yi entered the Kumsusan Assembly Hall with her son, I pictured Chai Shi-rong in my mind.

Among my Chinese comrades-in-arms in the days of the IAF, there was also Feng Zhong-yun, who was political commissar of the 3rd Route Army of the NAJAA. Feng had been secretary of the Party branch committee of Qinghua University. He had been a teacher in Harbin for some time. After embarking upon the revolutionary road, he had been engaged in Party work in the North Manchuria Provincial Party Committee and in various counties under it. He had been imprisoned on two occasions, had been punished for an error in Party work and had twice received bullet wounds.

Feng Zhong-yun worked in the Soviet Union from the autumn of 1939 to February 1940 in order to solve the problem of military and political solidarity between the anti-Japanese guerrilla movement in Northeast China and the Soviet Union. He made great efforts to arrange the joint conference of the North Manchuria Provincial Party Committee and the Jidong Provincial Party Committee held at the beginning of the 1940s, as well as the meeting with Soviet authorities convened later.

In the days of the IAF, he had been chief of the intelligence section of the political department and had also taught politics to officers.

When he was at the training base in the Far East region, Feng ate his heart out because he did not know whether his wife and children, from whom he had parted a long time before, were alive or dead. Sometimes when he could not bring himself to sleep or when he was gloomy at the thought of them, his

comrades said that they must be dead in all probability, and advised him to marry another woman and settle down. Feng, however, flatly refused to do so even if he had to live as a widower all his life. His noble and upright qualities as a revolutionary and human being were also expressed in the fact that he steadfastly remained faithful to and loved his wife, though there was little hope of their reunion.

I still have a picture in my mind of Feng humming a forlorn Chinese love song as he took a stroll one evening.

It is said that, following China's liberation, Feng had a reunion with his wife whom he had longed for so earnestly, and lived together happily once more.

Like Zhou Bao-zhong, he always extolled the heroic struggle of the Korean people and the KPRA with feelings of deep respect and gratitude.

When he was chairman of the Songjiang provincial people's government, he wrote a book titled, *Brief History of the 14-Year Struggle of the Northeast Anti-Japanese Allied Army*. Following is an extract from this book:

"The predecessor of the 2nd Corps of the Anti-Japanese Allied Army was the east Manchuria guerrilla army. The East Manchuria Anti-Japanese Guerrilla Army was originally divided into four anti-Japanese guerrilla battalions–the Yanji, Wangqing, Helong and Hunchun guerrilla battalions. The majority of the population in the Jiandao area were Koreans. Hence, Koreans constituted the core of the east Manchuria guerrilla army.

"Under the command of General Kim Il Sung, a prominent national hero of Korea, this army advanced to Antu, Linjiang, Changbai and the Amnok River, and met Yang Jing-yu, commander of the 1st Corps of the Anti-Japanese Allied Army, a fraternal army.

"Moreover, under the leadership of General Kim Il Sung, they organized the Korean army for the restoration of the fatherland. They crossed the Amnok River and advanced deep into the northern area of Korea on a number of occasions to conduct operations. There they fought several bloody battles against the Japanese imperialist aggressors and secretly formed the Korean people's underground organizations of the ARF.

"After liberation, all the Korean people, young and old, men and women, unanimously welcomed General Kim Il Sung, enthusiastically shouting, 'Long live the national hero General Kim Il Sung!' "

Feng, after serving as chairman of the Songjiang provincial people's government, was consecutively head of the Beijing Library and Vice-Minister of Irrigation and Electricity in later years. When he worked as vice-minister, he frequently visited our country to discuss the problem of the common use of a power station by Korea and China.

When Feng came to our country in September 1958 as head of a delegation from the Chinese Ministry of Irrigation and Electricity, I met him at the Suphung Power Station. I still remember how, following our inspection of the facilities of the power station, we climbed the dam and, looking down upon the beautiful scenery of Lake Suphung, discussed the matter of jointly building a new power station on the Amnok and increasing cooperation between the two countries in the field of the generation of hydroelectric power.

Feng is said to have died in prison in the spring of 1968, after being persecuted on a false charge of being a Rightist during the "cultural revolution".

Xue Wen, Feng Zhong-yun's wife, visited our country in company with her children on my 80$^{th}$ birthday. Feng had longed for her so earnestly when he was at the training base in the Far East region.

Xue Wen had worked at the Manchurian Provincial Party Committee during the anti-Japanese war. She was of short stature and looked sincere.

According to Xue Wen, Feng Zhong-yun was rehabilitated at the end of 1977, nearly ten years after he had died in prison, and was buried at the revolutionary martyrs cemetery on Mt. Babao on the outskirts of Beijing.

When Feng's family threw themselves into my outstretched arms, with tears in their eyes, I also felt a lump in my throat, remembering the bygone days.

Feng's bereaved family visited our country on a number of occasions in later years, too. One year, during her stay in Pyongyang, Feng Yi-luo, Feng Zhong-yun's eldest daughter, was about to celebrate her 60$^{th}$ birthday there. Comrade Kim Jong Il sent her a table as a present on that occasion.

The militant friendship and intimacy established between Feng Zhong-yun and me are continued by our next generation.

Zhang Shou-jian, who was active as a political worker in the days of the IAF, was also a Chinese comrade-in-arms with whom I was on intimate terms. When he was in northern Manchuria, Zhang was commander of the $3^{rd}$ Route Army. He was also called Li Zhao-lin. He was a close friend of Feng Zhong-yun, and he was also on familiar terms with Kim Chaek.

What was characteristic of his personality was modesty and devotion. Probably because of this we became friends at our very first meeting. I became very attached to him, for he gave prominence to his comrades when something good was achieved, and was the first to step forward whenever there was something difficult to be done.

The dossiers on the commanding officers of the guerrilla unit kept at the Comintern evaluated Zhang Shou-jian as an excellent organizer and as a brave, energetic and creative leader of the guerrilla army.

During the anti-Japanese war the soldiers of the north Manchuria guerrilla army frequently sang *The Bivouacking Song,* which he wrote.

After the victory in the anti-Japanese war, Zhang Shou-jian energetically shouldered heavy responsibilities as the secretary of the Songjiang district committee of the CPC and vice-chairman of Songjiang Province before he was assassinated by Kuomintang agents in Harbin.

Zhou Bao-zhong, Zhang Shou-jian and Feng Zhong-yun have all passed away.

In April 1992 my old comrades-in-arms from the days of the IAF visited me and congratulated me on my $80^{th}$ birthday. Among them were Chen Lei, his wife Ri Min, and Ri Jae Dok.

I treated them as honoured guests.

Chen Lei had worked as the chief of the propaganda section, and chief of the political department of the $3^{rd}$ Regiment, of the $6^{th}$ Corps of the NAJAA. In the days of the IAF he had been a platoon leader. After liberation he was secretary of the Heilongjiang provincial committee of the CPC and governor of Heilongjiang Province. It was when he was chief of the advisory

committee of the Heilongjiang provincial Party committee that he visited our country leading a friendship delegation from Heilongjiang.

On my $80^{th}$ birthday Chen Lei made me a present of a scroll bearing the words, *Long Life and Good Health to Comrade Kim Il Sung on His* $80^{th}$ *Birthday*. On the scroll he wrote that I had led the arduous struggles against the Japanese and US imperialists to victory and built a country of bliss for the people on our land of 3,000 *ri* and wished me a long life along with Koryo. Chen was an accomplished calligrapher.

Ri Min presented me with a collection of 100 revolutionary songs which had been sung during the anti-Japanese war. In the days of the IAF she had worked as a broadcaster.

The peoples and revolutionaries of Korea and China have lived as friendly neighbours on either side of the Tuman and Amnok Rivers, and have fought shoulder to shoulder, sharing weal and woe for over half a century since the days of the great war against the Japanese. This valuable tradition of struggle and fraternal friendship will continue in full blossom from generation to generation.

In July Juche 83 (1994) the report of the sudden demise of the great leader Comrade Kim Il Sung spread all over the world. The news, which came like a bolt from the blue, was a devastating shock and brought untold grief to people all over the world.

Chen Lei and Ri Min immediately left Harbin by car to pay their last respects to him.

When Comrade Kim Jong Il heard, from the Korean consulate general in Shenyang, that Chen Lei and his wife were coming to Korea by land, he personally took measures to receive them on the Korean side of the Amnokgang Bridge and guide them to Pyongyang. When the car provided by the North Phyongan Provincial Party Committee reached Sinanju carrying the couple who had crossed the Amnok, another car, sent by the respected General Kim Jong Il, was waiting for them there.

After leaving Harbin, the couple had covered 1,000 kilometres in two days, but they could not bring themselves to sleep, recollecting the benevolent image of Comrade Kim Il Sung which was deeply imprinted in their minds from the days of the anti-Japanese war. When they reached where the departed was lying, it was 12 pm. Without even taking the time to smooth the wrinkles

from their travel-stained clothes, they hurried to him and said, shedding hot tears, "Respected Comrade President, Chen Lei and Ri Min, your comrades-in arms, have come."

The respected General Kim Jong Il met Chen Lei and his wife on the platform of the meeting in memory of Comrade Kim Il Sung.

Zhou Wei, Zhou Bao-zhong's daughter, regarded her failure to see Comrade Kim Il Sung as her lifelong regret. In October Juche 84 (1995) she presented a letter and a picture album she herself had edited, to Comrade Kim Jong Il. That album included a large number of photographs relating to Zhou Bao-zhong's life as well as many photographs showing Comrade Kim Il Sung and Kim Jong Suk, heroine of the anti-Japanese struggle.

Zhou Wei's wish to visit Korea was fulfilled in the summer of Juche 85 (1996). She came to Pyongyang in great haste with her mind filled with recollections of Comrade Kim Il Sung, who had been dear to her since her childhood days at the training base in the Far East region. The first thing she did after she arrived was to visit the Kumsusan Memorial Palace.

"President Kim Il Sung, Zhou Wei has come. Can't you open your eyes just once and look at me?" she muttered to herself and shed sorrowful tears. She pledged to promote the friendship between Korea and China succeeding to the work of her father and mother.

# 8. Fighters from Northern Manchuria

One or two days after our arrival in Khabarovsk, An Kil told me that Choe Yong Gon was not far away. He added that Choe had been eager to meet me, and that when he learned of my arrival he would come at a run. I, too, was eager to see Choe Yong Gon. Like Kim Chaek, Kang Kon, Ho Hyong Sik and Pak Kil Song, he was a comrade-in-arms whom I had wanted to meet for a long time.

The primary aim of the second expedition to northern Manchuria we organized when we were active in the Jiandao area was to meet Kim Chaek, Choe Yong Gon and other Korean comrades-in-arms there and help their struggle. To our regret, however, this aim was not fulfilled at that time owing to unavoidable circumstances.

I heard that Choe Yong Gon sent liaison men to us four times. One of them is said to have gone as far as Dunhua before turning back.

It was the common desire of all the Korean communists who were active in various areas of eastern, southern and northern Manchuria to collaborate, cooperate and achieve solidarity among themselves.

Choe Yong Gon was one of the outstanding people who had played a leading role in the building of the Anti-Japanese Allied Army in northern Manchuria, especially the formation of the 4$^{th}$ and 7$^{th}$ Corps. Before he came to the Far East region, Choe Yong Gon had been active as chief of staff of a corps.

Pak Hun, a graduate of the Huangpu Military Academy in southern China, was the first to tell me about Choe Yong Gon. This happened when we were stepping up training following the founding of the Anti-Japanese People's Guerrilla Army in Antu. Our greatest headache in those days was a shortage of military instructors. Although we had organized the guerrilla

army, we had only one military expert capable of giving training to it.

Whenever Cha Kwang Su, Pak Hun and I gathered, we discussed where we could get military experts from. So Choe Yong Gon naturally cropped up in our talks.

Pak Hun said to me: "After the decease of Sun Yat-sen, the period of collaboration between the Kuomintang and the CPC came to an end. As a consequence, all the young Koreans who had been at the Huangpu Military Academy dispersed. Choe Chu Hae is one of them and is worth contacting. He had been a training instructor at the academy. If there were one or two people like him, they would be of great help to us. I wonder where he is and what he is doing now."

Later, I found that Choe Chu Hae was one of Choe Yong Gon's aliases; others were Kim Ji Gang and Choe Sok Chon.

On hearing that Choe Yong Gon was in Khabarovsk, I suggested that we should go to see him first instead of waiting for him to come to us.

When I arrived at his quarters following An Kil, Choe Yong Gon jumped to his feet and gazed at me for a good while. He was a typical military officer, with square shoulders.

"I failed to meet you, Commander Kim, in Manchuria, but I see you here in Russia," said he by way of greeting, grasping my hand. His eyes were full of tears. He said he had heard that I would arrive in Khabarovsk soon, but he did not know I was already there. Then he repeatedly expressed his regret at receiving me at his quarters instead of himself coming to see me.

"It has been my lifelong desire to fight alongside you, Commander Kim. I am extremely glad to meet you like this. Let's not part again."

Choe Yong Gon had gone through many twists and turns since he embarked upon the revolutionary road. He said that, as we had, he had joined the revolution as a member of a student movement.

When Choe was attending middle school, he led a strike of students against the American headmaster. The headmaster fled, but the Japanese authorities caused Choe and all the other students who had organized and led the struggle to be expelled from the school.

Later, Choe took part in the March First Popular Uprising and was involved in the work of issuing anti-Japanese publications. He was imprisoned for some time because of this.

Following this, he went to Seoul and stayed there for some time. There, by chance, he formed a close friendship with a political operative of the Korean Provisional Government in Shanghai. This man induced him to go with him to Shanghai, but there Choe found himelf disappointed by the state of affairs at the provisional government. Later he was involved in the communist movement and gained some military experience in the course of the struggle. Nevertheless, instead of helping to recover his nation's sovereignty, which he had intended to do when leaving the homeland, he got more and more involved in the Chinese revolution. In those days the young Koreans active in China proper pinned great hopes on the Chinese revolution.

Recollecting those days, he said: "Although I took pride in making revolution for another country, I somehow could not get rid of the sad feeling of being pushed to the sidelines. Sometimes I tried to rationalize my actions by convincing myself that the Chinese revolution meant the Korean revolution, and vice versa. Nevertheless, I could not help feeling misgivings that I was running away from the situation in the homeland."

When Sun Yat-sen tried to overthrow the Beijing warlord government and establish a people's revolutionary government through the Kuomintang-Communist Cooperation, advocating alliance with the Soviet Union and with the communists, and assistance to the workers and peasants, Choe Yong Gon took an active part in that struggle. He said that he thought that a favourable situation for winning Korea's independence would be created if the people's revolutionary forces succeeded in their expedition to the north and seized Northeast China.

However, things did not turn out as he had expected. After Sun Yat-sen's death, Jiang Jie-shi undermined the Kuomintang-Communist Cooperation, and massacred communists. He did not take nationalities into consideration in suppressing communists, and during this massacre a large number of Koreans were killed in China proper.

At this time, Choe Yong Gon had many close shaves. He fled China proper to northern Manchuria to escape the whirlwind of the bloody massacre. Choe regretted having gone straight to northern Manchuria instead of going to Jiandao at that time and said it was because he had lost his bearings.

"If I had gone to Jiandao, I would have met you, Commander Kim, earlier and have been some help to the Korean revolution. I will always regret it."

I said to him: "I also regret very much my failure to join hands with military experts like you, Choe Yong Gon, earlier. If people like Kim Chaek and you had been in eastern Manchuria, we would have done more work for the Korean revolution. But let bygones be bygones. It is because the hard core like you kindled the flames of the anti-Japanese struggle in northern Manchuria that you were able to revolutionize the Koreans residing there and develop the movement to form the anti-Japanese allied army. The revolutionization of the masses is the fundamental preparation for the Korean revolution. This will also be favourable for the Chinese revolution. Let us not consider the Korean revolution and the Chinese revolution in isolation. As long as we make revolution on Chinese territory, we cannot but attach importance to the joint struggle with the Chinese communists and to the common front with the Chinese anti-Japanese forces. What you have so far done in northern Manchuria is for the good of China's liberation as well as for the sake of Korea's liberation."

Choe Yong Gon said that what had troubled him most until then was loneliness. To my question as to why he had felt lonely, he replied that this was because the enemy was too strong and the future of the revolution seemed too dim. On top of that, as he had lived among Chinese, it was natural that he should have felt lonely. He said that, when he had felt extremely lonely, he had thought of the Korean communists fighting on Mt. Paektu.

Hearing him, I could understand why he had sent his messengers to me four times.

Choe Yong Gon said he had felt great emotion when he was informed of

the Ten-Point Programme of the ARF. He said that, having read the programme, he had thought he should go to Mt. Paektu and fight with us if he were to make a greater contribution to the Korean revolution. He added that, if this was impossible, he had made a resolve to strengthen ties with our unit at least.

I told him that I had organized the second expedition to northern Manchuria in 1935 in order to meet our Korean comrades-in-arms in northern Manchuria.

That day Choe Yong Gon and I also talked about how we busied ourselves organizing armed ranks in eastern and northern Manchuria at the beginning of the 1930s.

Choe Yong Gon said that, though he had set up a training centre and organized armed ranks among peasants in northern Manchuria, he had been anxious because the work of increasing the strength of the force was not proceeding as he had intended. Saying that he had heard a long time before that I insisted upon all-people resistance, he asked me to tell him how I intended to mobilize all the people in resistance.

I said to him: “The actual situation of our country is that the majority of the Korean people eagerly desire a revival from their dire straits. If we arm them, we will have a large army amounting to hundreds of thousands. How do we intend to arm them? We intend to form, in various parts of the country, paramilitary organizations that will carry out armed activities while working. Workers’ units will be organized in industrial districts, peasants’ units in rural areas and students’ units in towns and cities. Paramilitary corps and workers’ shock brigades were already formed and had begun their activities in the northern areas of Korea in the latter half of the 1930s. We intend to form such organizations in all parts of the country in future. Who will form them? Hard cores that were trained in the anti-Japanese armed struggle will be dispatched to various regions.”

I went on, “This is not something which will be realized in the distant future. The general trend of the world is now turning towards the ruin of Japanese imperialism. Although Japan is now carrying on a war against

China alone, she may provoke a war on a larger scale sooner or later. Japan's present situation on this one front alone is hopeless. Therefore, if she sparks another war, it will bring about her ruin. The moment of our final showdown will assuredly come in a few years. When that moment comes, we should launch a fight to the death through all-people resistance by rousing all the resistance organizations across the country in cooperation with an all-out offensive of the KPRA, the main force of the Korean revolution. This is my plan for the operations for the liberation of the country and my line of winning independence by our own efforts."

Having listened to me, Choe Yong Gon said that he realized that his view on the people was wrong. He confessed, "Until now, I did not regard the people in the homeland as the people who would carry out the operations to liberate the country, considering them merely as people to be rescued. Only pioneers, not everybody, make revolution. It is true that the workers and peasants are the motive force of the revolution. However, how can all of them make revolution? The pioneers should present the people with a liberated country, shedding their blood. This was my view of the masses up until now. Hence, I attached more importance to military affairs than to political work for the revolutionization of the masses."

As our talk continued, Choe Yong Gon who had looked somber at first, cracked a smile from time to time.

Coming to Khabarovsk, Choe Yong Gon said, he had been interested only in military cooperation with the Soviet Union, and had not given particular thought to arming the entire people of Korea or launching operations to liberate the country. He added that now that he had met me the way he should take was quite clear.

"Commander Kim, to be candid, I have been desirous of fighting on Mt. Paektu. I believe I can discharge my duty as a Korean only when I go there. I don't care what my rank will be there, that of a private or anything else. I only wish to fight under you on Mt. Paektu and be buried there," said Choe Yong Gon tearfully.

"Now that we Korean revolutionaries, who were fighting scattered all

over southern, eastern and northern Manchuria, have gathered in one place, let us not disperse any more, but fight for Korea with our hands joined more firmly." This is what I said on leaving Choe Yong Gon's quarters.

I got everlasting impressions from my meeting with Choe Yong Gon. What he said to me in tears expressed his long-cherished desire–to make a direct contribution to the revolution in his own country even when he shared lodgings with the people of another country. What he said also expressed his keen desire to have one central figure and make the revolution by our own efforts, uniting around him.

This wish and desire were not confined to Choe Yong Gon. They were common to all the Korean communists in southern, eastern and northern Manchuria.

The fact that Choe Yong Gon so earnestly desired to fight on Mt. Paektu was the expression of his trust in and expectation from me, as well as the manifestation of his patriotism to make the Korean revolution and die for Korea.

The greater part of Choe Yong Gon's desire was met spontaneously by the organization of the IAF in later days. Since his first meeting with me in Khabarovsk, he had been with us. Finally, his wish to fight together with me on Mt. Paektu was met in this way.

Kang Kon was also among my comrades-in-arms from northern Manchuria whom I met in the Far East region.

Prior to the formation of the IAF, I met Kang Kon during my stay in Camp North. He was so delighted to see me that all the military and political cadres of the 2nd and 3rd Route Armies present there were surprised. Among the military and political cadres in northern Manchuria only Zhou Bao-zhong and some other commanding officers from the 5th Corps knew the relationship between Kang Kon and me.

Kang Kon and I were old acquaintances. When I was in Manchuria I met him once during our first expedition to northern Manchuria and another time during the second expedition to that place.

He had been active as the political commissar of the 9th Regiment, 3rd

Division, 5th Corps since 1938. Judging from the fact that he had become a regimental political worker soon after his enlistment, I could guess how great was the trust he enjoyed.

After we adopted our policy of small-unit activities at the Xiaohaerbaling conference, the 5th Corps also reorganized its structure. Kang Kon was then appointed political commissar of the Guard Company under the direct control of the General Headquarters of the 2nd Route Army. The head of the Guard Company was Pak Rak Kwon.

Whenever I met the messengers frequenting northern Manchuria, I inquired after Kang Kon, and each time I was told he was fighting well. He was well-known in the 5th Corps as a promising commander.

He made a name for himself in only two or three years after his enlistment. This was possible not only because he fought well, but also because he loved the people dearly.

It is said that people were very attached to him, regarding him as a straightforward and honest man. Whenever he entered a village in command of his unit, the villagers warmly welcomed him, saying that Political Commissar Kang had come. Moreover, they vied with each other in imploring him to admit their children to his unit. The popularity of his unit was so great because it was said that Kang Kon's men had a strong sense of organization and discipline.

Kang Kon displayed his talent and ability as a military commander to the full. His military talent was displayed more conspicuously when we employed small-unit activities. Kang Kon was particularly good at ambushing and derailing trains. Once he derailed a train carrying only Japanese officers. During the period of small-unit activities he dealt heavy blows to the enemy by derailing trains and demolishing railway bridges, roads and arsenals.

On the day of my reunion with Kang Kon we unburdened our hearts on the bank of the Amur for many hours.

He lived with us from the time when the IAF were organized. The house in which Kang Kon, I and some others lived was called a *tori* house in those

days. The leading commanders of the allied forces lived in this house.

A *tori* house was a cylindrical building common in Siberia in those days. In this type of house, rooms were arranged around the corridor.

In later days I talked with Kang Kon on a number of occasions. Flawless in thinking and practice, he talked in an amusing way. Some people regarded him as a dry and strict commander, but they said that because they did not know him well. Kang Kon was cool-headed and lucid, as well as simple and honest. Yet he was sentimental and kindhearted, too.

He did not gild his assertions or views, but frankly talked about what he ordinarily thought without embellishing anything.

Kang Kon talked a great deal about his native place, Sangju, in North Kyongsang Province. He said he had left Sangju when he was ten years old. Although he had left his native place at such a young age, he still described it vividly and pined for it.

At that time Kang Kon said several times that Sangju was famous for liquor and silk. According to him, it was also a big producer of persimmons.

Whenever he talked about the liquor, persimmons and silk of Sangju as well as about the Raktong River and Mt. Sokri, his eyes became moist. Although outwardly dry and cool-headed, he could not control his emotion, like a poet, and became more talkative than usual once he started talking about his native place. He recollected with sorrow his elder sister, whom he had left with another family as the future wife for their son.

Those who love their native places as ardently as Kang Kon did his, will be enthusiastic in making revolution. One who loves his birthplace warmly will love his country ardently, and such a man will be enthusiastic about making revolution.

The acquaintance between Kang Kon and me developed into warm comradely love in the days of the IAF.

What I admired in Kang Kon in particular was his extraordinary military eye and a high sense of responsibility. He possessed exhaustive military knowledge. Whenever we debated a military operation, he expressed his opinion enthusiastically. His assertions were unique and had profound meaning.

Kang Kon was good at Chinese and Russian. He started learning Russian after he came to Camp North. Before long, he was able to converse with Soviet officers and read the Military Regulations of the Soviet Union published in Russian. Both the Soviet and Chinese peoples admired his clear head. He invented and used his own abbreviations for Chinese characters.

Kim Chaek rejoiced over Kang Kon's development more than anyone else. At one time they were teacher and student. When he was active in Ningan, Kim Chaek taught at a private school for some time, and Kang Kon studied there.

"Sin Thae was considered a genius in his private school days. He could already recite *The Three Warring Kingdoms*[15] in those days," said Kim Chaek. Sin Thae was Kang Kon's real name.

Although Kim Chaek and Kang Kon were former teacher and student, they were like twins so far as their qualities were concerned. In his lifetime Kim Chaek was famous for being straightforward and honest. Kang Kon also possessed these qualities in equal measure. So far as the principles and abilities of the two men were concerned, they were similar.

When Kang Kon was Chief of General Staff after liberation, many of his subordinates were older than him and quite a few of them had longer revolutionary careers than he had. However, all of them were reserved towards him because they knew well that he was a man of strong revolutionary principles.

Kang Kon did not make the least concession to anyone as far as principles were concerned. He did not forgive those who abandoned their principles, even though they might be his close relatives.

Comrade Kim Jong Il stresses to officials the need to learn from Kang Kon's loyalty to the Party and the leader as well as from his revolutionary principles. He is right. Kang Kon was a talented official worthy of being followed by our successors, as well as an attractive military commander. He was killed in action at a too young age. If he had lived, he would have done a lot more work for the building of the armed forces.

Kang Kon was devoted to the revolution to the last moment of his life. He

did not have any rest throughout his life. After Japan's defeat he could not return to Korea, his homeland, as he was helping the Chinese revolution. He took part in the operations to liberate Northeast China as commander of the Jidong military sub-district.

Kang Kon formed many units with Koreans during the operations to liberate Northeast China. It is said that the number of Koreans who took part in these operations amounted to 250,000. Kang developed stomach trouble owing to overwork. When he worked as chief of Camp No. 2 of the Security Officers Training Centre back home, he had a lot of trouble because of a gastric ulcer. In those days he never ate regular meals, and I made sure that at banquets he was not plied with strong drinks.

Kang Kon accomplished great exploits in the building of the people's armed forces. The military achievements of our People's Army in the first stage of the war, such as the victories in the battles to liberate Seoul and Taejon, are largely associated with Kang Kon.

After the People's Army advanced into the area around the Raktong River, Kang Kon reported the situation on the frontline to me. In the middle of his report he said that in a few days he would be able to reach Sangju, his native place, and meet his elder sister. However, to our regret, he was killed in action not far from his native place in September 1950.

Kang Kon was a talented official. He was at home both in political and military affairs. He was 32 years old when he fell in action. Even the Soviet people envied us for having a young Chief of General Staff. It was really a tragedy that Kang Kon died at such a young age.

We awarded the title of Hero of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to Kang Kon. In order to preserve his achievements for posterity, we named the First Central Military Academy the Kang Kon Military Academy. On the occasion of the $20^{th}$ anniversary of the foundation of the Republic, we had a bronze statue erected to Kang Kon's memory in the city of Sariwon.

It is really regrettable that we have lost Kang Kon. I frequently think of him even now.

When they were going to the training base in the Far East region, all the

anti-Japanese fighters from eastern Manchuria wanted to meet those Koreans who had fought in northern Manchuria. It is said that those from northern Manchuria also felt the same.

When I went to Camp North for the first time, all the Korean soldiers from northern Manchuria came out of their barracks and welcomed me. The overwhelming majority of them were strangers to me. When I was about to leave Camp North, they were reluctant to let me go. It seems like only yesterday.

Korean fighters from northern Manchuria treated those from eastern Manchuria as if they had come from their native country. There was no difference between northern and eastern Manchuria in that they both belonged to Manchurian territory. Nevertheless, eastern Manchuria is considerably nearer to Korea than northern Manchuria. Eastern Manchuria was developed by Koreans, and Koreans pioneered the revolution there. So it was not unreasonable that all of them regarded eastern Manchuria as part of their homeland.

Anti-Japanese fighters from eastern Manchuria had advanced into the homeland in company with me on several occasions. Therefore, it was natural for people from northern Manchuria to treat us as people from their homeland.

When I went to Camp North for the first time, Kim Ryong Hwa was noticeable for his impressive moustache.

Next to him was Choe Yong Jin, a big joker. He also grew his moustache. He stepped forward and introduced his fellows one after another. He did not stick to formality and was so light-hearted that I did not feel at all that he was a stranger to me.

When introducing people, he explained the characteristics of each of them briefly. For instance, he described Kang Sang Ho as having a marvellous memory, Kim Ryong Hwa and Kim Tae Hong as crack shots, Jang Sang Ryong, Kim Ji Myong and Jon Pong So as being nimble and diligent, Kim Jung Dong as having a quick eye and Ryu Ung Sam as an expert farmer. I found out later that his descriptions were accurate.

Kang Sang Ho had a clear head, Kim Ryong Hwa and Kim Tae Hong were crack shots, and Jang Sang Ryong, Kim Ji Myong, Jon Pong So, Pak U Sop and Kim Yang Chun were diligent and honest people who did any tasks assigned to them immediately, without putting them off. When he was at the training base in the Far East region, Jang Sang Ryong ran errands frequently between Kim Chaek and me.

Ryu Ung Sam was well-informed about farming. When he was in northern Manchuria, he was in charge of farming in the guerrilla zone. At Camp North, too, he took part in all the affairs of the sideline farm. At one time he worked as chief of the sideline farming department in the Ministry of the People's Armed Forces.

In those days I also met Choe Min Chol and Ri Jong San. The latter was the youngest of the men in northern Manchuria. When Choe Yong Jin reminded us of how Ri Jong San had fallen down from his bed at the sound of a shot announcing an emergency call, all of us held our sides, laughing.

Women soldiers who came from northern Manchuria had an open-hearted character in general. There are many vast plains in northern Manchuria. It seems that if people live in a wide area, their character also becomes open-hearted. They were all adept at riding.

Among the women soldiers from northern Manchuria, Pak Kyong Suk and Pak Kyong Ok were the best wireless operators and Wang Ok Hwan was the best horse rider. Ri Suk Jong was also said to be good at riding. Ho Chang Suk, Jon Sun Hui and Jang Hi Suk were outstanding members of the sewing unit. Ri Kye Hyang was a crack shot.

Whenever he introduced his colleagues, Choe Yong Jin put in a vainglorious phrase and in doing so, each time his face would bear a funny expression, provoking a smile. In my days in West Jiandao I had occasionally heard that Choe Yong Jin was a funny man. However, when I met him personally, I found him to be wittier than I had expected.

It was well-known even to the men of the main force that Choe Yong Jin was a famous fighter and a bold man. He became renowned as a valorous fighter since he displayed courage in the battle to annihilate high-ranking

officers of the Japanese "punitive" force and their men who were on an inspection tour in a motorboat.

Choe Yong Jin was strong in his revolutionary principles. Once, when he was a regimental or a company commander in northern Manchuria, he visited his father who was serving as a Self-defence Corps member, in order to obtain provisions for his unit.

His father had originally been an anti-Japanese independence fighter who fought in the Independence Army. When he came back home following the breakup of the Independence Army, the enemy drafted him into the Self-defence Corps to employ him in disrupting and alienating Koreans.

When Choe Yong Jin told his father that his unit was undergoing hardships because of a lack of provisions and asked him to give some food grain, the latter flatly refused, saying there was no grain to give him.

To tell the truth, Choe Yong Jin's family had several acres of land and plenty of grain. Though his family was not very rich, it could get along without having to eat gruel for supper. I am not sure whether Choe Yong Jin's father refused to give grain to show to other members of the Self-defence Corps that he was not in collusion with the guerrilla army.

Hot-tempered Choe Yong Jin was enraged to hear his father's answer. He said to him: "How can you, Father, who served in the Independence Army, behave like that? You, more than anyone else, should give us assistance, shouldn't you? The anti-Japanese guerrillas are suffering every hardship in order to oust the Japanese imperialist robbers and win back the lost country. Those who do not help the guerrillas shedding blood in the fight for the restoration of the country, are traitors who have no concern for the country and the nation."

Probably Choe Yong Jin's father was greatly shocked by what his son had said. Anyway, he gave his son 15 cartloads of grain. In later days, too, he procured a large amount of grain and weapons and sent them to the guerrillas. Although he was a member of the Self-defence Corps, he invariably assisted the guerrilla army without abandoning the patriotism and fidelity of his bygone days when he had followed the Independence Army with a rifle in his hand.

Later, the Japanese killed him.

In the days of the IAF, Choe Yong Jin was a company commander in our contingent. Even the Soviet soldiers admired his company, the $1^{st}$ Company, because it led others in all respects. He was well-known as an exacting, competitive and hard-working commander.

After liberation he fought well against spies and saboteurs to defend Pyongyang. He also worked conscientiously to train the hard cores of the regular armed forces at the Pyongyang Institute and the Central Security Officers School. When he was Minister of Fisheries, there were bumper harvests of fish. At one time he was a Vice-Premier.

At the training base I held a touching reunion with the fighters whom we had sent to northern Manchuria when we were active in eastern Manchuria. Among them were Choe Kwang, Kim Kyong Sok, Jon Chang Chol, Pak Rak Kwon, Kim Ok Sun and An Jong Suk.

On seeing me, Choe Kwang burst into tears, saying he had not seen me for such a long time. When he stopped crying, he said, “General, even in northern Manchuria, I always looked towards Mt. Paektu, where you were. Now I will never go to another unit even if you send me back forcibly.”

Following the formation of the IAF, he became a platoon leader.

I met Choe Kwang for the first time when he was head of the Children’s Bureau. At that time he brought an art troupe of the Children’s Corps to me, and they gave a performance.

Around the time we left for our first expedition to northern Manchuria, he gave up his work as head of the Children’s Bureau and joined the young volunteers’ corps. He said that until that time he had thought that when a rifle was fired, a bullet flew out together with the cartridge. As soon as he joined the corps, he became a platoon leader.

I remember how, when a battle at Diaomiaotai began, he stationed his platoon on the hill west of Yaoyinggou to guard me. Later on, he took part in the Battle of Laoheishan. Before he came to the Far East region, he was a platoon leader of the guard unit at the headquarters of Zhou Bao-zhong’s $5^{th}$ Corps. I was told that Zhou Bao-zhong was very fond of Choe Kwang.

Because of this, Zhou Bao-zhong asked us to give him Kang Kon, Choe Kwang and Pak Rak Kwon first of all when he was selecting people needed for the operations against the Japanese in Northeast China.

When they went to Northeast China, Kang Kon became commander of a military sub-district and Choe Kwang, Pak Rak Kwon and Nam Chang Su, regimental commanders.

The area of activities for Choe Kwang's regiment was Wangqing County. In the days of Manchukuo they built their unit and waged battles eating the sorghum stored up by the Japanese. At that time some people complained that there were too many troops organized by Choe Kwang and others. They claimed that only 200 troops were allowed to be kept in the county. Therefore, Choe Kwang continued to recruit people into the army in the rural areas outside the county seat. The armed ranks organized by our comrades in those days made, in later days, a major contribution to the building of the army in our country, not to speak of the operations to liberate Northeast China.

Choe Kwang's unit made great military achievements in Dunhua, too. Engaged in battles on one hand, on the other they formed Party and mass organizations.

We recalled Choe Kwang to the homeland in the early autumn of 1946, instructing him to choose his best men and bring them with him. He came home with some 200 others whom he had chosen. On the day of their arrival in Pyongyang, Kim Chaek and Mu Jong went to the railway station to meet them. At the news of Choe Kwang's arrival, Kim Jong Suk prepared a special meal for him.

After his return home, Choe Kwang worked as chief of staff of Camp No. 1 of the Security Officers Training Centre. He took part in the Fatherland Liberation War as commander of the 1$^{st}$ Division of the Korean People's Army. He has performed great deeds for the building of our army.

He was faithful both as a man and a warrior. When the *Pueblo* incident occurred, he ate his meals and slept in his office for a year without returning home because of the tense situation. He faithfully assisted the Party and the

leader with a pure heart all his life. He has experienced twists and turns and has suffered greatly in the course of the revolution. However, he has always been loyal.

Choe Kwang is one of the military officers whom I treasure and love most.

Comrade Kim Jong Il also trusts him very much, loves him dearly and gives him prominence. His great trust in and love for Choe Kwang can be clearly seen from the fact that, after he was acclaimed as the Supreme Commander, he appointed the latter, now in his seventies, Chief of General Staff of the Korean People's Army.

When I was going to the training base in the Far East region, I thought I would also meet Pak Kil Song and Ho Hyong Sik without fail. However, to my deep regret, my meeting with them was not realized because both of them had been killed in action in northern Manchuria.

Ho Hyong Sik was one of the founders of the Zhuhe guerrilla army. Kim Chaek talked a lot about Ho, as indeed did all the fighters from northern Manchuria.

From Kim Chaek's stories about Ho Hyong Sik I still remember the episode in which, during a winter march to Jiangnan, Ho stood guard as a punishment on his own accord. That march was said to have been unusually arduous.

With a view to lessening the men's fatigue, Ho Hyong Sik had commanders stand sentinel and he himself kept guard. They had no watches in those days. Therefore, they measured the time by burning sticks of incense. When one stick was burnt out, it was considered to be time to relieve the sentry.

One night it was Ho Hyong Sik's turn to stand sentinel in front of the camp gate, but he failed to relieve the sentry by mistake. The following morning he criticized himself in front of his men and at night he stood guard as a punishment on his own accord.

Seeing the chief of staff standing sentry as a punishment, one man felt extremely sorry for him and broke his incense stick in half.

When he came to know this, Ho Hyong Sik said to the man: "I am

grateful to you for being considerate towards me, your commander. However, you have overlooked one important thing. There cannot be dual standards of discipline in the revolutionary ranks. Once a routine is established, everyone should observe it without exception. Only then will discipline prevail throughout the ranks. Let us both stand sentry tonight as a punishment and each reflect on our wrongs." It is said that he stood sentry as a punishment that night again.

Ho Hyong Sik received word from Kim Chaek to come to the training base as soon as possible. Even after that, Ho put off his departure for the base to finish the planned operations. He was killed in action before he managed to go to the base.

No success of any military operations could make up for the loss of such a fine commander as Ho Hyong Sik.

The death of Ho Hyong Sik was indeed a grievous loss to us who were planning the operations for the liberation of the country.

Pak Kil Song had been active in Wangqing before he went to northern Manchuria and served as commander of a contingent. Under the influence of O Jung Hwa, he took part in the "harvest and spring struggle" of the early 1930s at a young age.

Pak Tok Sim, Pak Kil Song's father, rented a farm and at the same time he worked as a boatman. I knew that old man well. On many occasions he carried on his boat the goods people sent to our unit.

When he was head of the Children's Bureau, Pak Kil Song frequented my office. So we made friends with each other very quickly. He was very hard-working. He was not contented with the work as head of the Children's Bureau. He always sought a chance to join the army. And, when we were leaving for our second expedition to northern Manchuria, he badgered me to allow him to join us.

I denied his request and sent him to Luozigou as a political operative. The revolutionary masses who had lived in the guerrilla areas of Wangqing and Hunchun gathered there. Pak Kil Song was a suitable man for protecting them. He was proficient at work with the masses.

In later days, I heard about Pak Kil Song several times through messengers.

Pak Kil Song went to northern Manchuria because his identity had been disclosed in the area of Luozigou. After he had been flogged in prison, he was released on sick bail. He got away from Luozigou in search of our unit. Although he was young, he struggled well in prison.

From the time he was crossing the Laoyeling Pass, Pak Kil Song underwent great hardships to find out our whereabouts. It is said that after some time he joined a unit which was active in the neighbourhood of Xiaolaidipan, Ningan County.

Pak Kil Song assumed the heavy responsibility of commander of a contingent when he was still in his twenties. He was a model in the activities of the Communist Youth League. In the days when he was commander of a contingent, Ri Jong San was his orderly.

Pak Kil Song's contingent was renowned as a unit which was good at fighting. His contingent had cavalry. I was told that the enemy dreaded the cavalry very much. Having wound up all the work that had been planned, Pak Kil Song was on his way to the Far East region. However, he was arrested and killed by the enemy.

Ri Jong San received the news by wireless and ran to me. During the march Pak Kil Song engaged in a fierce fight against the enemy and was badly wounded. He fell unconscious and the enemy dragged him away. If he had come to the Far East region soon after receiving our message, such a thing would not have happened. It is truly regrettable.

When we brought Pak Kil Song's father, who had been living in Luozigou, to Pyongyang to live here, Choe Kwang and Kim Ok Sun wanted to take the old man to their home and support him there. So they began to follow the necessary procedure. However, Kim Il happened to learn about this, and asserted that he should support the old man in view of their relationship in the days of the small-unit operations.

The news of the two families maintaining that they should each support the old man reached my ears. Kim Il asked me to make a decision on the

matter. I was satisfied with the noble humanity of the first generation of our revolution and said to Kim Il: “Pak Kil Song’s father is not only the father of Kim Il, Choe Kwang and Kim Ok Sun. The old man is the father of us all, and all of us are his sons and daughters. Therefore, let us all support the old man on behalf of Pak Kil Song.”

We made arrangements for the old man to live in one of the good houses on the bank of the Pothong River in which ministers and vice-ministers lived in those days.

There would be no end to it if I were to talk about all my comrades-in-arms in our days in northern Manchuria.

When I was at the training base in the Far East region, I also met the fighters from northern Manchuria who, as the special detachment of the IAF, took part in joint reconnaissance with the Soviet troops. Hong Chun Su was one of them.

Hong was in the Independence Army for some time, and visited such places as Pyongyang, Kangso, Anak and Sariwon to carry out a series of fund-raising activities. He was a crack shot and was good at reconnoitring. During the operations to liberate the country, he fought on the frontline.

The Korean communists who were part of the IAF had formerly fought in southern, eastern or northern Manchuria. Nevertheless, they were firmly united in ideology and will, and powerfully accelerated the final victory of the Korean revolution. The Laoyeling Pass is on the boundary between eastern, southern and northern Manchuria. However, that mountain pass could not draw a line of demarcation in the hearts of Korean communists. All of them wished to go to Mt. Paektu and fight with us even if they were to die in the course of this.

Their unanimous wish to fight on Mt. Paektu became the factor that ensured the unity of ideology and will among our ranks. It was a great inspiration for us as we strengthened our own forces for the Korean revolution.

## 9. Nurturing the Root of the Revolution

Revolution does not only mean struggle; it means both struggle and life. Fusing struggle and life and creating a beautiful life through struggle, thus achieving social progress and prosperity, is the revolution that communists aspire to.

Even amid hardships that are beyond human imagination, the anti-Japanese revolutionary fighters created a noble and beautiful life that only communists can conceive of, and built a morally ideal community everywhere they went. While struggling, they loved and married. There were poems, songs, tears and laughter in their lives.

Entering the 1940s, our revolution flourished, acquiring new meaning and content. The birth of the second generation of our revolution gave us fresh hope and delight in the decade when we were advancing towards the final victory of the anti-Japanese revolution.

Kim Jong Il was born at dawn on February 16, 1942, in the Paektu secret camp.

His birth was the most auspicious event in my family. From the bottom of our hearts Kim Jong Suk and I blessed Kim Jong Il, who was born as a man of Korea, hearing the roar of gunfire on the battlefield.

When he was born, I thought how glad my father and mother would have been if they had been alive! They would have loved him as dearly as my grandfather and grandmother had loved me. People say that one loves one’s grandchildren more dearly than one’s own children. But Kim Jong Il’s grandparents died long ago.

He had great-grandparents, but as they were in my hometown far away, I could not let them know about the birth of their great-grandson.

In my childhood I basked in the love of all my family. Every member of

the family of ten took loving care of me as the pillar of the family. The villagers' love for me was also great. They must have taken care of me more kind-heartedly probably because I was an offspring of a family devoted to the independence movement.

But Kim Jong Il did not enjoy such love. There were no neighbouring houses in the area of the Paektu secret camp and the training base in the Soviet Far East region where he spent most of his early childhood. We spent our youth in log-cabins or in tents with no address, and sometimes in the open covered with snow and ice.

In his childhood Kim Jong Il lived among soldiers. He was loved by my comrades-in-arms, even though they were not his family. He grew up in the love of the guerrillas more than in my love.

The guerrillas did not hide their delight at his birth, saying that he would make another General on Mt. Paektu. Kim Chaek always called him "Little General".

Seeing a new generation of our revolution born in the flames of the anti-Japanese revolution and growing up as vigorously as the birch trees on Mt. Paektu, all the soldiers of the KPRA became convinced of the bright future of the Korean revolution and, with strength, courage and fighting will increased one thousandfold fought even more staunchly to liberate their country.

Seeing my comrades-in-arms regarding his birth as an auspicious event for everyone, and their loving care for him, I warmly felt that their genuine love for my family was being handed down to the next generation.

As I said before, I have lived all my life in the love of my comrades. I owe to these comrades and the people all my ability to lead the revolution and construction in good health until now.

Since taking leave of my mother at the age of 14, I have lived among the people and my comrades. In the days of the anti-Japanese revolution, in the days of building a new country, and in the days of the Fatherland Liberation War, my comrades faithfully helped and protected me without wavering. They became human shields, protecting me from bullets, from rain and snow,

and from illness. When I was suffering mental pain, they inspired me with strength.

Whenever I was exhausted or in pain, the first thing I did was call on my comrades and the people. They gave me fresh strength, opened blocked roads for me and inspired me with confidence that I could perform any task, however difficult.

Now I will tell you about an event in our life at the training base in the Soviet Far East region.

In the winter of the year in which the IAF were organized and we stayed at Camp North, it snowed heavily in the Soviet region and in Manchuria. The snowfall was so heavy that even wild animals would come to human habitations in search of food. Traffic was held up for some days by the knee-deep snow.

At that time Kim Il, who had been on a small-unit mission, returned to the camp with a heavy sack of rice and met Kim Jong Suk. Saying that he had obtained the rice because bread was the staple food in the camp, he asked Kim Jong Suk to serve the Commander with cooked rice at each meal and not to use it for any other purpose.

It was not the first time that Kim Il had obtained rice for me. Though he ate uncrushed maize everyday, he always tried to have cooked rice served to me without fail.

Each time the supply department rationed out rice in small amounts, Ryu Kyong Su would give his ration to Kim Jong Suk, saying she should cook rice for me without saying anything about it.

The revolutionary *camaraderie* and communist morality between my comrades-in-arms and me was expressed after Kim Jong Il's birth as moral obligation for Kim Jong Suk and Kim Jong Il.

Soon after Kim Jong Il's birth Kim Jong Suk made clothes for him by shortening some of our uniforms.

The circumstances were no different when we were at the training base.

In those days the Soviet people were not eating their fill, because of the war. Their slogan was to eat little, sleep little and wear humble clothes. So it

was impossible to obtain clothes, quilts or bonnets for the baby. The women guerrillas gathered bits of cloth and patched them together into a quilt. Kim Jong Il used that quilt until the day of national liberation.

Whenever they saw my son under that quilt, my comrades-in-arms felt very sorry for him. That sight weighed on Rim Chun Chu so heavily that when he returned to the motherland for a holiday while working in Northeast China after Korea's liberation, he brought with him 500 blankets and gave them to Kim Jong Suk and me as a present. We donated all the blankets to the Mangyongdae Revolutionary School.

The circumstances were very difficult, but the soldiers of the KPRA looked after Kim Jong Suk and Kim Jong Il with the utmost devotion.

The women guerrillas especially took much trouble. They lent willing hands to Kim Jong Suk.

From his childhood, Kim Jong Il followed the army closely and liked the world of soldiers. So when they met him, my comrades would put their army caps on his head. Some carved pistols out of pieces of wood while working in the enemy area and gave them as presents to Kim Jong Il.

When we were staying in the Far East region, my house was situated near our barracks, unlike at the Paektu secret camp; so when they were at leisure after training and on holidays many soldiers called at my house and played with Kim Jong Il, teaching him to walk, giving him rides on their shoulders and teaching him songs. Sometimes they would take him to the Amur River and show him ships cruising up and down and the migratory birds flying away.

Kim Jong Il had an unusual start to life, as, born to guerrillas, he grew up in clothes impregnated with powder smoke, eating army rations and hearing shouts of military command.

He was upright and full of guts from his boyhood, partly because he was endowed with these qualities, but more importantly because he grew up valiantly, free from constraint, learning the truth of life and struggle, among the fighters who had the strongest sense of justice and strongest faith in the world.

He was precocious, probably because he grew up under the influence of the guerrillas. Their noble feelings and emotions became rich nourishment for his mind and their mettle as soaring as the peak of Mt. Paektu added flesh and blood to his manly personality.

Men soldiers were no less enthusiastic about helping Kim Jong Suk and Kim Jong Il. They would visit my house and try their best to do something for Kim Jong Suk. As was the case in the Paektu secret camp, at the training base in the Far East region nourishing food was not readily available. Everybody was leading a hard life, tightening their belts; even though one wanted to help others, it was often impossible to do so.

At this time, Rim Chun Chu and many others would save little by little the bread rationed out to them and give it to Kim Jong Suk. Everybody went hungry to assist the front fighting against the German invaders, but they gave bread to her every day.

Kim Jong Suk would eat part of the bread and keep the remainder before giving it back to them.

Once Rim Chun Chu went to Manchuria carrying a wireless set on a mission. Keeping wireless contact with Headquarters, he conducted political work for some months. He performed his mission with credit, and when he returned to the training base, he brought dozens of eggs with him. It was very far from our training base to the place of his political work and, worse still, the path was not a paved avenue; it was a path through a forest of bayonets. How difficult it must have been for him to carry a bundle full of eggs while carrying a wireless set at the same time in the shadow of death!

When he appeared in front of us with the eggs, I was truly moved by his devotion to Kim Jong Suk and Kim Jong Il.

As a matter of fact, Rim Chun Chu and Kim Jong Suk had been friends for a long time. When Kim Jong Suk had been attending night school in Fuyandong, Rim Chun Chu and Kwak Ji San had taught there. Rim had given much medical help to the local people. Kim Jong Suk's family too received medical treatment from him. When she fell ill once, Rim Chun Chu had treated her, I was told.

Not only in his days in the IAF but all his life Rim Chun Chu did his best for the good of my family–Kim Jong Suk, Kim Jong Il and me.

When the country was liberated, he made every effort to find out the whereabouts of Kim Jong Suk's relatives. Regarding it as his duty to introduce the lives and exploits of Kim Jong Suk, my younger brother Kim Chol Ju, and Kim Jong Suk's younger brother Kim Ki Song to the younger generation, he collected materials on them for several years and on this basis wrote many books about them.

He was a representative intellectual who helped me with knowledge while fighting with arms in hand. Endowed with profound knowledge, he made records right from the early days of the anti-Japanese armed struggle.

He started writing history when he took notes on my talk to the cadres of the Party and Young Communist League at Chaoyangchuan, Yanji County. From that time on, as a historian of the KPRA, he participated in important conferences such as those held at Nanhutou, Nanpaizi and Xiaohaerbaling, and made faithful records of them.

He contributed several articles to the publications connected with the Comintern.

One year *The Pacific* carried an interview by its special correspondent with Rim Chun Chu. Reading the interview, I found out that he had boasted a lot about my unit to the correspondent of the magazine.

Rim said the KPRA had succeeded in every battle because of wise planning, elusive tactics, promptness, accuracy and bravery. He also said that our soldiers were strong in the spirit of independence, cultured and optimistic.

The correspondent wrote that Rim Chun Chu had contributed articles about the fighting achievements of the KPRA and the story of the heroic death of Kim Kum Sun.

Rim Chun Chu said to his comrades-in-arms now and then: "It is important to make use of our own publications. It is good to compile reports and documents for the Comintern; and it is also important to record the fighting achievements of the revolutionary army. But what is more important

is to keep a systematic record of the history of Commander Kim in the communist movement and national liberation struggle of Korea. Poor as my writing skill is and shallow as my knowledge is, I will write Comrade Kim Il Sung's biography and hand it down to posterity."

There were many in our guerrilla army who rendered services to the revolutionary cause with arms but few who, with a firm faith, made records of the history of the guerrilla army voluntarily and left them to posterity as Rim Chun Chu did.

Rim Chun Chu was an experienced political worker who had been engaged in Party work for a long time. This notwithstanding, we pay more tribute to him as a writer and historian than as a political worker because his achievement in formulating our revolutionary history is an incomparably great exploit. With rich materials he put our revolutionary history in order and brought to it profound depth of thought.

He could testify to the course of the anti-Japanese armed struggle because he kept a diary in those days.

If Rim Chun Chu, a writer and historian, had not kept the materials on the anti-Japanese armed struggle, a great part of the history of our activities would never have seen the light of day.

He played a great role not only in systematizing our revolutionary history but in giving wide publicity to it. Doing Party work with the South Phyongan Provincial Party Committee after liberation he told Jo Ki Chon[16], Jong Kwan Chol[17] and other intellectuals a lot about the Battle of Pochonbo and other activities of our anti-Japanese guerrillas.

He rendered great service to enriching the archives of the history of our Party by writing books and many reminiscences on the revolutionary traditions.

He swept away all obstacles to defend and brighten the revolutionary ideology and history of his leader and the revolutionary traditions of our Party.

In our days in the IAF he delivered political lectures on *The Tasks of Korean Communists*, a treatise I had written. Some of the foreign

commanding personnel asked him to reconsider the matter of including the treatise in the curriculum. But he continued his lectures on the treatise, saying, “We have long acclaimed Commander Kim Il Sung as the leader of the Korean nation. What’s all this fuss when I am giving lectures on my leader’s work?”

He showed great concern over my health.

When he was the secretary of the Party committee of a regiment, he once informed me about what had been discussed at a meeting. The decision was that I must not carry my knapsack with me. I admonished him, a man with many years of revolutionary service, for discussing such a thing at a meeting.

He answered, “This is the will of the Party members. If they see you carrying a knapsack, other people will scorn us. You should accept the opinion of the masses.”

He has been just as faithful to the leadership of Comrade Kim Jong Il as he was to mine.

What, then, made him a revolutionary who respected his leader and the leader’s successor so ardently and remained so faithful to their leadership? It was because he, like Kim Hyok, Cha Kwang Su and Kim Chaek, knew full well, from his life experience, the harmfulness of factions and felt to the marrow of his bones how precious the leader was.

Kim Jong Il regarded him highly as a member of the first generation of the revolution. He loved Rim Chun Chu and showed the utmost consideration for him.

One year Rim, who had been ambassador to a foreign country, returned to the motherland after having a dispute with the authorities of that country over an issue of principle. The factionalists and worshippers of great powers who were entrenched in the Party raised a fuss that this matter should be called to account organizationally, saying it was an unprecedented diplomatic incident.

But Kim Jong Il picked peaches in the garden of our house and sent them to him, saying that he had demonstrated the mettle of Korea to modern revisionists. He highly praised Rim Chun Chu for not only having authenticated, from the early days of his revolutionary activity, the struggle

of many revolutionary fighters who had fought shoulder to shoulder with him, incorporating it in the historical treasure store of our Party, but also having finished the writing of *Reminiscences of the Days of the Anti-Japanese Armed Struggle*, a book worthy of being considered a national treasure, while working as a diplomatic envoy in a foreign country, thus establishing and systematizing the anti-Japanese armed struggle as the history of our struggle, the history of the struggle of the KPRA.

While writing, Rim Chun Chu received much assistance and encouragement from Kim Jong Il. In the course of this, he was moved by Kim Jong Il's human appeal and followed and respected him as his mentor and leader. From that time he reported all problems arising in and out of his work to Kim Jong Il and acted according to his decisions. Wherever he went, he delivered public lectures and wrote books on Kim Jong Il's greatness.

In the late 1960s, when Rim Chun Chu was engaged in writing, the matter of succession to the revolutionary cause, especially the successor, became the focal point of argument and the demand of the times in the arena of the international communist movement.

Choosing the right man as successor is a fundamental question that decides the future of the revolution and construction, the country and people. We can take many examples of revolutions and countries going to ruin because of having chosen wrong successors.

The basic factor that enabled the Soviet people to build their country into a world power in a short span of time after the October Revolution was that Lenin had chosen a good successor. Stalin, faithful comrade and disciple of Lenin, was loyal to the cause of his leader throughout his life. After Lenin's death, Stalin made a six-point pledge in front of his coffin. In the course of leading the revolution and construction subsequently he carried out all his pledges. When the German invaders were at the gates of Moscow, he had the other Politburo Members and cadres evacuated, but he himself remained in the Kremlin, commanding the fronts.

When Stalin was alive, everything went well in the Soviet Union. But things began to go astray after Khrushchev came to power. Modern

revisionism appeared in the Soviet Party, and the Soviet people began to suffer from ideological maladies. He forgot the care with which his leader had brought him up: he vilified Stalin on the excuse of personality cult, expelled from the Political Bureau of the Party all the veteran revolutionaries loyal to Stalin and deprived them of their Party membership.

Once, while visiting the Lenin Mausoleum, Rim Chun Chu encountered Molotov on Red Square in Moscow, after he had been removed from office. Molotov advised him to carry forward the ideology and achievements of his leader faithfully without falling prey to revisionism, taking the precedent of the Soviet Party into consideration.

At that time, Rim Chun Chu keenly realized that if the issue of successor was not settled properly, both the revolution and the Party would perish, he said later.

As the bitter lessons of history teach us, the essential quality of the successor is his loyalty and moral duty to the leader and his cause. Loyalty to the leader cannot exist separated from moral obligation. Loyalty and moral duty to the leader are the first and foremost qualities his successor must possess.

Moreover, the successor needs high qualifications and ability to lead the revolutionary cause pioneered by the leader in accordance with his ideas and intentions.

Our people marvelled at the unusual ability and revolutionary principle Kim Jong Il displayed in establishing the leader's ideological and leadership system, and at his indomitable will and vigour, as well as the noble loyalty and filial devotion he showed in defending and putting into effect the leader's lines and plans. They have deeply realized that Kim Jong Il is the very successor capable of carrying forward the revolutionary cause of Juche and consummating it, true to their leader's ideas and intentions.

Our people have long respected and supported him.

In supporting him, the veterans of the anti-Japanese revolution are in the van now as they were before. They have acclaimed him as the only successor to me because they are firmly convinced that only when he leads the Party,

state and the armed forces can a bright future be ensured for the nation, and the revolutionary cause of Juche pioneered on Mt. Paektu be carried forward and consummated without the slightest deviation. That they have acclaimed him as my successor means that the armed forces have held him up as the leader of the nation.

Rim Chun Chu, along with Kim Il, Choe Hyon and O Jin U, have taken the lead in acclaiming Kim Jong Il as the head of our Party and state.

The anti-Japanese revolutionary veterans have unanimously acclaimed him as my successor because, before all else, they were attracted by his human appeal. Kim Il has always said there will be no one in the world who is as loyal and dutiful as Kim Jong Il is. Rim Chun Chu has said that there will be no one who respects the revolutionary forerunners as heartily and defends the revolutionary traditions as ardently as Kim Jong Il does and that no great man of ideology and leadership will be his equal. O Jin U has said that Kim Jong Il is the general of generals who displays unexcelled audacity and outstanding intelligence. Choe Hyon and Ri Jong San have often said that Kim Jong Il is a man of the richest human sympathy.

Ri Ul Sol also is a long-time assistant to Kim Jong Suk, Kim Jong Il and me.

I still remember him clearly when he was my aide-de-camp after liberation. He would make a security check early in the morning and take breakfast with Kim Jong Il in the kitchen of my house. He was on quite intimate terms with Kim Jong Il in his boyhood.

When I was going on a field-guidance trip, he would take Kim Jong Il with him. He always understood his needs and looked after him.

I still remember when I met Kim Jong Il in Sinuiju during the war. He came to see me after a long period of evacuation. At that time he asked Ri Ul Sol, my chief aide-de-camp, to take good care of me in place of his mother. His words are still ringing in my ears.

Why does Kim Jong Il still trust him and why is he so grateful to him? It is because Ri Ul Sol took care of him after his mother died.

Kim Jong Il was bereft of his mother when he most needed parental care.

To make matters worse, he and his sister had to take leave of me for some time because of the war. As I went here and there to reconstruct the economy after the war, I failed to take good care of them. It was Ri Ul Sol and other comrades-in-arms of mine who looked after them as their parents would do in the place of their kinsfolk when they were spending their childhood lonely, missing their mother, who had passed away.

In the summer of 1953 I visited the Soviet Union with a Party and government delegation.

Before we left Moscow after completing our itinerary, the Soviet side gave a farewell banquet in our honour. The watermelons served at the banquet tasted especially good. After the party I went back to my lodgings. Ri Ul Sol, who was packing a carton, was very embarrassed to see me. I asked him what it was. He hesitantly replied that he had packed a watermelon for my children. The watermelon in the cardboard box was as large as a pot.

Kim Jong Il was very delighted to get the watermelon. Saying how good it would be if our people who had suffered hardship in the war had a taste of this watermelon, he suggested growing watermelons from its seeds. From the next year, together with Ri Ul Sol, he began to grow watermelons from the seeds of that watermelon in my garden. The watermelons thrived and spread far and wide.

Ri Ul Sol took leave of his parents at a young age, and lived all his life by my side. While fighting the imperialists, big-power chauvinists, reactionaries and factionalists as my bodyguard for decades, he experienced difficulties of every description, tasting the sweets and bitters of life. In the course of this he became a man of great fortitude.

Soon after the conference at Khabarovsk I sent Pak Yong Sun and Ri Ul Sol to Voroshilov for a short training course in wireless operation, ordering them to come back straight to the unit after the course.

While I was operating in the area northeast of Mt. Paektu and in the homeland in command of a small unit, Ri Ul Sol, having finished the course, was making preparations to return to the unit.

On the day he received a commendation at the review of the short course,

a high-ranking Soviet officer told him to make preparations to go to Korea, saying it was an order from the Comintern.

Ri Ul Sol was quite puzzled at the order.

The Soviet officer explained, “You are trustworthy. Songjin, to which we attach strategic importance, is your hometown. Settle down there and send us wireless reports of the enemy movements.”

He refused to obey the order, saying that, though he wanted to work in his native town, he had been ordered by his Commander to return to the unit after the short course to teach wireless operation.

The officer tried to persuade him the next day again. He said they would get Comrade Kim Il Sung’s permission later. Apparently he attempted to influence the young man in the name of the Comintern.

Ri Ul Sol retorted, “I can’t go anywhere before executing the order my Commander gave me. We have spilt much blood because wireless communication was not available to us. You may not know it, but in order not to repeat that experience I must return to the unit quickly, as my Commander ordered.”

In those days we were in the Soviet Far East region temporarily, and the IAF had not yet been formed, so there was no unified system of command. The KPRA and the NAJAA were acting independently under their own command system.

In this situation, it was unreasonable for a Soviet officer to attempt to divert Ri Ul Sol for another purpose in the name of the Comintern and without prior consultation with us.

Ri Ul Sol’s refusal to accept any other order before executing his Commander’s was an expression of his unswerving loyalty to me.

Ever since his days in the Children’s Company, he has been devoting his life to the work of protecting me, and he has never acted against my will or neglected his duty. Awake or asleep, he has thought only about me and has done everything for my health and personal safety.

When I was fishing in the Wukou River in 1939, he protected my back with a machine-gun.

He ensured my security also after liberation.

During the war there were several counterrevolutionary elements near the Supreme Headquarters. Strictly confidential information directly affecting the destiny of the country was transmitted to the Americans by Pak Hon Yong and Ri Sung Yop.

In the summer of 1952 Ri Sung Yop made his stooges call dozens of American planes by wireless to Konji-ri where the Supreme Headquarters was situated. The planes combed the location of the Supreme Headquarters. They dropped a big time bomb near the building of the Supreme Headquarters, close by my quarters.

Ri Ul Sol called an emergency meeting of my aides-de-camp and bodyguards, and they decided to try to remove the bomb at the risk of their lives. Turning in their Party membership cards, they removed it to a valley.

On the occasion of this incident, Ri Ul Sol caught all the subversive elements and reactionaries lurking around the Supreme Headquarters.

He was also brave in the struggle against the anti-Party counter-revolutionaries.

When I returned from a visit to the Soviet Union and other socialist countries in Europe in 1956, Ri Ul Sol, the chief aide-de-camp, called on me one day and warned me to take care, exposing in detail the suspicious movements of Choe Chang Ik and Pak Chang Ok.

Nam Il also informed me on the phone of their suspicious behaviour.

Ri Ul Sol also combatted Kim Chang Bong's warlordism face to face.

Just as he has devoted his life to me, he is also faithful to Kim Jong Il.

On their return to Camp South, Ri Ul Sol and Pak Yong Sun trained many wireless operators.

In subsequent days he was dispatched on small-unit missions on several occasions to vantage points where decisive battles for national liberation would be fought and to points of strategic importance where the main forces of the Japanese army were concentrated.

As a member of a small unit he once went to the area of Laoheishan in Wangqing County with a wireless set and carried out reconnaissance.

We had obtained information that the enemy had built a large airfield in that area and were massing hundreds of planes, guns and trucks there. But we could not confirm the fact, and this hindered preparations for operations. The Soviet military were also anxious to ascertain the truth. So we dispatched the small unit there. The members of the small unit infiltrated the airfield and found out that the new planes and trucks there and the new-type guns in its vicinity were all fakes made of wood. Ri Ul Sol transmitted to me the result of the reconnaissance mission.

Many people say that I have found a good solution to the problem of leadership succession. But I want to say that the anti-Japanese revolutionary veterans played an important role in solving the problem. They brought him his food and clothing and taught him to walk when he was an infant. Right from those days trust in and respect for them sprouted in Kim Jong Il's heart, and trust in and intimacy with him sprouted in their hearts. It was the anti-Japanese revolutionary fighters who played leading and active roles in his ideological and spiritual growth, and in his emotional development.

Kim Jong Il's firm confidence of victory, iron will and revolutionary optimism may be said to have been enriched and tempered through his intimate relationship with the veterans. In turn, the veterans learned from his boundless loyalty, filial devotion and moral duty to the leader, love for and spirit of devoted service to the people, as well as his unshakable will and resolve to carry forward and consummate, true to the leader's ideas and intentions, the revolutionary cause pioneered by the forerunners. They have all realized that he is the leader who will shape the future of the country and nation excellently and responsibly.

That Kim Jong Il is a son of Mt. Paektu means that he was born of the anti-Japanese revolution as a son of the nation. He is a son of Korea who started his life and rose as a lodestar of our revolution in the embrace of the anti-Japanese revolutionary fighters.

The veterans not only acclaimed him as the successor to our cause, they also played the role of pioneers in establishing his leadership system. Acclamation of the successor does not mean that everything will go well of its own accord.

This is why I call on the anti-Japanese revolutionary veterans, whenever I meet them, to live longer so as to continue to help Kim Jong Il.

Another important task in carrying forward and completing the leader's cause is to bring up the hard core and the reserves who will support the successor's leadership loyally. If the hard core are not built up properly and the reserves are not fostered soundly, the successor's leadership system cannot be established properly, nor can his lines and policies be carried out.

Since liberation we have developed the revolution with the hard core who fought on Mt. Paektu. We now have a hard core of Party members, soldiers and young people numbering millions. If we have a leader and the hard core, we have nothing to fear. The future of the Korean revolution led by Kim Jong Il is as bright as the blue sky.

The valley where Kim Jong Il's old home is situated is called Sobaeksu. The valley had exquisite scenery that can be seen only in the alpine region of our country. Before we unearthed the site of the secret camp there in the 1980s the valley was a primeval forest. Even people unversed in military affairs will say it is a natural fortress. It was an ideal site for the Headquarters of the KPRA.

The former name of Jong Il Peak was Jangsu Peak. We renamed the peak in order to hand down Kim Jong Il's achievements to posterity. Our people are proud of the peak before the world even in their songs.

It was Mt. Paektu that brought up Kim Jong Il as the leader of the nation. The fighters of the mountain raised him to be the lodestar, and the soul of the mountain is encapsuled in him.

The succession of our revolution is firmly ensured because Kim Jong Il, who was born and grew up in the flames of the anti-Japanese revolution, is the leader of the nation. He enjoys support and love from all the people.

The cause of Kim Jong Il, who was born of guerrillas and became the successor to the leader, to assume national leadership, amidst the unqualified support and trust of the people and the army, will be ever-victorious in the future too.

CHAPTER 24

# Nationwide Resistance against The Japanese



*August Juche 31(1942)–August Juche 34(1945)*

# 1. In Anticipation of the Day of Liberation

When writing their curricula vitae after the liberation of the country, quite a few anti-Japanese revolutionary veterans put down “Military Academy 88” or “Training School, Camp 88” in the column of academic attainments.

The then personnel management officials were amazed at the fact that the anti-Japanese revolutionary fighters who had gone through arduous guerrilla warfare were all graduates of a military academy. But what was really meant by “Military Academy 88”?

Later, the officials found out the answer to this question while listening to the great leader’s account of military and political training during the years of the IAF.

After the formation of the IAF, we underwent intensive military and political training while carrying out brisk small-unit actions and reconnaissance activities.

Our educational programme covered a wider range of subjects and a greater depth of content than those used in regular military educational institutions. Training was several times as intensive as that in regular military academies.

Since the training programme was aimed at producing officers, it would be no exaggeration for the trainees to say that they graduated from a military academy. I think, therefore, that the anti-Japanese revolutionary veterans had the years of the IAF in mind when they wrote that they had finished “Military Academy 88” or “Training School, Camp 88”, on their curricula vitae.

Needless to say, we neither put up such a sign nor issued such a diploma. After a few years of training, however, they thought that they had completed the course of a modern military and political university.

Our comrades learned much in those days–military theory, and the strategy and tactics of modern regular warfare.

The education in the period of the IAF was not confined to military affairs. It was comprehensive education and training in political and military subjects, as well as in the preparations for the operations to liberate the country and for the building of the Party, state, and army in the liberated homeland.

So we attached equal importance to political and military education. We studied political economy, philosophy, the theory of party-building, and economic management.

These educational activities, however, did not go smoothly at the outset.

Towards the end of 1942 and in early 1943, the tide of the Second World War began to turn in favour of the anti-fascist forces. The sweeping victory of the Soviet army at Stalingrad broke the back of fascist Germany and marked the turning-point not only in the Soviet-German War but also in the whole of the Second World War.

With the long-awaited day of national liberation drawing on, mountains of work piled up, calling for my attention. The matter of the greatest concern for me then was how to build a new country in the liberated homeland.

We would have to build the Party, the state and the army and develop the economy and cultural undertakings. But we were short of cadres, the leading and hard-core elements of the revolution. That was the most difficult problem.

At that time I thought of training the anti-Japanese fighters, who had been tempered and tested in the arduous armed struggle, into competent cadres with versatile capabilities, equal to any challenges not only in the military field but also in the fields of Party work, state administration, economic management, education and culture. I decided to resolve all these problems through military and political training within the framework of the IAF. The initial training programme, however, had allotted a smaller proportion to political education than to military training.

I believed that politico-theoretical education should not make up a smaller proportion than military training. I brought this question up with General Apanasenko. He said that the first and foremost task of the IAF was to train

the military cadres for national revolution in Korea and Northeast China, and that we should speed up training to ensure that everyone mastered the strategy and tactics of modern warfare, and acquired skills in the use of weapons and equipment so that they could fight in cooperation with the Red Army when a new situation was created in Korea and Manchuria.

I insisted, “We must not be biased towards the training of military cadres. In order to build a new country after the liberation of Korea, we must train all the cadres needed in various fields as pillars for the building of an independent and sovereign state. To this end, we must increase the proportion of political education in the training programme. But I do not mean that we should take time off military training for political education. I mean to carry out the training as planned, while conducting just as much political education.”

Apanasenko was convinced.

As a result, the proportion of political education considerably increased in the military and political training programme of the IAF.

Setting about the military and political training, we took active measures to awaken the men to the need for this training. The Party members’ groups and YCL organizations held meetings and made public their resolutions by means of newspapers and billboards, as well as over the radio in the camp.

Each contingent selected able cadres as political teachers.

After the formation of the IAF, the Headquarters of the Soviet Far East Forces organized a short course for political trainers.

But reaction to the lectures was not encouraging at first. The Russian lecturers spoke poor Chinese and could hardly make themselves understood. Therefore, a Chinese interpreter was appointed for each Russian lecturer. Even that method was not very helpful to our comrades, as translation took up half the time of the lectures, so they were not effective.

Given this situation, we got the Russian textbooks translated into Korean and then compiled lesson plans to suit our specific conditions, and distributed them to our political teachers.

The materials for political lectures in the initial period comprised

philosophy, political economy and the history of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, as well as the history and geography of both the Soviet Union and China. There were also lectures on *The Communist Manifesto* and *Problems of Leninism.* Needless to say, these were helpful to our men in widening their political horizons.

It was unreasonable, however, not to teach the men of the KPRA Korean history and the Ten-Point Programme of the ARF, while giving them lessons about the history of the Soviet Union and China.

So, I saw to it that the Ten-Point Programme and the Inaugural Declaration of the ARF, *The Tasks of the Korean Communists*, and some other books we had previously regarded as essential reading were included in the teaching materials, and that Korean history and geography were taught.

The political teachers took much trouble to prepare their lectures. As they had to prepare and give lectures while participating in training, they were always under heavier pressure of work than the ordinary soldiers.

The lectures were fairly good. They were convincing because they were supported by the teachers' rich fighting experience.

More than once I listened to An Kil's lectures, and I found them very interesting. An Kil, a veteran political worker, had an original way of giving political lectures. As they were spiced with humour and lively figures of speech, the students learned about revolution in a light-hearted atmosphere.

During lectures, he would recite a poem or sing a song, when necessary. During one lecture he quoted a full page from Lenin by rote.

When his men on the march were too exhausted to walk properly, he used to order a break, and play the harmonica and beat the drum, getting the men to dance and sing. That was his way of doing things. He did the same with his lectures.

Rim Chun Chu was good at giving lectures, and even better at tutoring. He would organize discussions or arguments among the trainees to get to know how well each of them was prepared and how well he understood the lectures. On this basis, he would give individual guidance after school. If any of them still did not understand the lecture, he would teach him by his bedside.

Kim Kyong Sok was also a good teacher. Not being an eloquent speaker, he always used to make careful preparations for his lectures, often sitting up late. He was very popular among his pupils. After completing his preparations, he always asked my opinion about them. He was a very serious and hard-working man. He would write down all that he was to say during his lecture.

Getting into this habit in those days, even after liberation, he used to write down for himself whatever speech he had to make, before speaking to his audience. He did the same with his reports to meetings.

The teachers' enthusiasm resulted in the improvement of the trainees' qualifications.

The lectures given by An Yong, Jon Chang Chol and Ri Pong Su were also popular among the trainees.

Liu Ya-lou, a graduate of the Frunze Military Academy, also gave good lectures. I can still remember him giving a lecture on the new type of rocket the Soviet Union had developed, Katyusha.

I myself also often gave political lectures.

At the reviews of military and political training, the soldiers of the Korean Contingent always won the highest marks.

Even Feng Zhong-yun, who was working in the political department of the unit, admired the results of the training of the soldiers of the Korean Contingent. He even asked me what the secret of their good results was. I said, "No secret at all. They have just worked hard, with towels tied round their heads, and cooling their faces with cold water." Then he commented, waving his hands: "Well, no one can match the Koreans in diligence."

Indeed, our comrades were very diligent in those days. It was exactly their sense of responsibility for the revolution that stimulated the soldiers of the Korean Contingent to be exemplary in military and political training.

However, there were some comrades like Pak Chang Sun who considered studying a headache at Matanggou years before. Typical of them was Pak Rak Kwon.

Pak Rak Kwon had been a member of the Young Volunteers' Corps in

eastern Manchuria. Later, he had been picked, along with other exemplary men and officers, to be transferred to the 5th Corps at the request of the comrades in northern Manchuria. He had served as leader of the guard unit of the 5th Corps under the command of Zhou Bao-zhong.

He was a brave fighter who was ready to go through fire and water. He was full of wit and swift in action as befitted a commanding officer.

In his days in the Wangqing guerrilla unit he once received a serious wound in the abdomen during an encounter with a Japanese "punitive" force. Holding back his entrails with his hand, he crawled back to the guerrilla zone.

He acquitted himself well as the commander of the guards of the unit in northern Manchuria and became a favourite of Zhou Bao-zhong. Zhou himself said that he had escaped death on several occasions thanks to Pak.

Pak Rak Kwon had a special skill in handling weapons. Trying any weapon once or twice was enough for him to be able to dismantle and reassemble it easily and swiftly, even with his eyes shut.

However, he loathed studying military theory. Whenever he was asked to study theoretical problems he would pull a long face immediately as if he had swallowed some bitter pill, and during theoretical study lessons he would sit in the farthest corner, trying to avoid eye contact with the lecturer.

I told him: "You are a platoon leader now. But in the future, when we fight large-scale modern warfare, you may have to command a regiment or a division. If you hate learning the knowledge of modern warfare as you do now, how can you command a regiment or a division? If you only rely on your own experience in commanding your unit, you may cause the deaths of many of your men. Do you want that to happen?"

After that, he applied himself to theoretical study with a firm determination. I once saw him out on the Amur all day long, engrossed in the study of the theory of infantry tactics, his whole body drenched with sweat as if he had a fever.

After liberation, he was dispatched to Northeast China.

He participated in the battle to liberate Changchun in command of a

regiment. He contributed to the victory in the battle to liberate the large city by his efficient command of his regiment because he had applied himself to the study of tactics while at the base in the Far East region, I think. He took the lead in the regimental charge at an enemy's position. He is said to have been wounded in several places by splinters from a mortar shell and died a heroic death worthy of his name. He is remembered as a hero by both the Koreans and the Chinese in their history.

"Study is also battle."–this is a truth we learned in actual life. A revolutionary must study to the last moment of his life, without a moment's interruption. Unless he studies, his mind will get rusty. Then, he will be devoid of foresight.

It is precisely for this reason that Comrade Kim Jong Il always emphasizes the need to study hard, regarding it as the first part of the process of training people to be revolutionaries.

We also educated the men and helped them widen their political horizons through the facilities for extracurricular activities and the means of information and agitation available at the base.

At the training base was a club equipped with a projection room, a library and a radio room, where the officers and men used to have meetings and film shows.

During the broadcasting hour, the base radio gave wide publicity to the soldiers, platoons, companies and battalions worthy of being held up as models in their study, military and political training, and daily life. It also broadcast news about the international situation, especially the news of the war against Germany, every day.

The IAF also published a newspaper. Each contingent and company had its wall newspaper, and platoons had their field bulletins. These forms of media carried news items about the ideological and moral education of the soldiers, and about the preparations for and reviews of military and political training.

We also gave the soldiers revolutionary and class education through the anniversary activities for the Red Army and the October Revolution, May

Day and other holidays. In those days the unit gave wide publicity to the Soviet heroes and heroines who had fought courageously in the Soviet-German War, which had a good influence upon the soldiers. Memorial services for the fallen revolutionary comrades-in-arms were organized in a significant way so that they served as occasions for giving revolutionary education to the soldiers.

When Ryu Yong Chan died, we also held a memorial service for him at the training base. He had been enlisted with the help of Kim Jong Suk, who, during her underground work in Taoquanli, had won him over to the revolutionary organization and trained him. He was a good fighter. He was drowned in the Amur when a ship carrying sand for the construction of a barracks capsized.

We also held memorial services at that time for Front Commanders Apanasenko, Vatutin, and Chernyakhovski.

During the memorial services our own band played dirges.

The allied forces occasionally organized lectures and meetings with the participants in the Soviet-German War.

We carried out both the study of military theory and military exercises in real earnest at the Far East base. We did tactical training, and all kinds of drills such as shooting, swimming, skiing, parachuting, and radio communication, to get ourselves ready for modern warfare.

We spent much time on offensive and defensive training, with emphasis on tactical problems. We also studied artillery, topography, sanitation, engineering, and anti-chemical warfare.

The training for guerrilla warfare was concentrated upon raids and ambushes. Because of their rich experience in actual warfare of this kind, all the soldiers plunged into this training in real earnest.

During military training, we would pitch our tents over a vast plain, the scene of which is still fresh in my memory.

When I directed the training, the company commanders and platoon leaders prepared their plans and carried them out. We made it a principle to undertake our style of training suited to the terrain of our country and the

physical constitution of the Korean people, drawing on experiences in the anti-Japanese war and the Soviet-German War.

We carried out tactical training in such a way as to follow up one subject of the curriculum with field exercises about it, through which we would judge the degree of the soldiers' understanding of the subject.

I myself conducted tactical training for the commanding officers. The objective of tactical training was to make each soldier equal to the job of a man a few ranks higher, that is, to make a company commander capable of commanding a battalion or a regiment, a platoon leader a company or a battalion, a soldier a platoon or a company, etc.

Tactical training was conducted with a platoon or a company as a unit. When briefed about the situation and given the mission, the man appointed as the commander would estimate the situation, make his decision, organize the operation and then give orders.

Let me tell you what happened at the beginning of tactical training.

One day I went down to a company to inspect its tactical training. Son Jong Jun was acting as a platoon leader that day.

He was commanding his platoon with an air of confidence. I gave him a new situation in which various obstacles were laid in its way and a reinforced enemy company was on a height. He attempted a frontal attack, but I prompted him to employ the tactics of roundabout breakthrough, and made him restart the attack.

It was not accidental that he attempted to employ a battle order that was not suited to the situation. It was an outcome of the training given by rote according to the then battle regulations whereby the troops were to attack in extended order behind a mechanized unit. Such an attack was unsuited to the specific conditions of our country, which has many mountains and valleys.

I made sure that all the lesson plans for tactical training were re-examined, revised and applied to meet the specific conditions of our country on the principle of developing them by drawing on our experience of guerrilla warfare. I told O Jin U to draw up a model tactical training plan for an attacking platoon. A noncommissioned officer as he was then, he drew up

a perfect model training plan with my assistance. In accordance with this plan, we organized a demonstration for the whole contingent. The reaction was very good. O Jin U also drew up a plan for manoeuvres involving the whole contingent.

Shooting drill consisted mainly of firing at fixed targets at different distances, moving targets, and suddenly appearing targets. The firing range was located eight to twelve kilometres away from our camp.

The Korean Contingent was also the best of all the allied forces in marksmanship. Ri Tu Ik in particular was a crack shot.

We selected the best shots for drills in sharp-shooting plus map-reading. They first drilled in firing straight shots at fixed targets. They shot so much that they said they could still feel their ears ringing even after their return to their quarters. After the drill we handed out to each of them a compass and a map marked with the route of a march, giving them the mission of catching a certain number of birds at such and such places, and returning by such and such an exact time. It was not an easy task, for they would have to spend almost a whole day to move as dictated by the marks that required them to change their course at a certain point by what angle and return by going round a certain place, and moreover, they had to shoot birds. This was mainly aimed at helping them to master marksmanship and map-reading.

In our days at the training base in the Soviet region of the Far East, we also had a lot of skiing and swimming drills. Anticipating the great event of the country's liberation, we needed to learn such skills for the guerrilla actions we were to carry out by basing ourselves in the Rangnim or Hamgyong Mountains, and for our operations to liberate the homeland by crossing the Amnok or Tuman Rivers.

Swimming drills took place in the Amur during summer. Considering the fact that ours is a maritime country, we attached special importance to swimming. Most of the soldiers of our contingent had grown up without seeing the sea, and those who could swim were few in number. So most of them were afraid of rivers.

In those days swimming was regarded as almost as difficult a drill as parachuting.

We first made the trainees drill by moving their limbs while lying on the ground before taking them to the river and teaching them through demonstration by the few who knew how to swim.

After their first experience in the water, we stretched a rope across the river and let them swim across with the help of the rope.

Feng Zhong-yun and a few others never learned how to swim; once in the water, they would sink like stones. Feng once lost his glasses in the water.

Kim Kyong Sok was nearly drowned while practising swimming alone.

Jon Sun Hui was the best swimmer because she had lived by a river. When she was young she used to cling to the back of the grown-ups when crossing the river; ashamed of it as she reached the age of discretion, she had learned swimming. Having experience as a nurse with the 7$^{th}$ Corps, she served at the training base as a nurse in the dispensary. Many of her comrades learned swimming from her.

The swimming drill was followed by a river-crossing drill, making them an all-round drill, so to speak. After a forced march of about 25 kilometres in full kit, the soldiers made a raft for each platoon to cross the river.

In this drill a straggler meant the loss of a mark. Choe Kwang's platoon was well-known for its proficiency in river-crossing, though it always had to surrender the first place to the others because of Kong Jong Su.

Kong Jong Su had worked as a farm hand before enlisting in the guerrilla army. Impeccable as his character was, he was born sluggish, most unlike a soldier. He burnt several caps one winter. He was slow to move, even when his trousers caught alight from a campfire.

During his service in the 5$^{th}$ Corps he was in Choe Kwang's platoon. Once, exasperated by this man, Choe Kwang had tried to drive him out of his platoon, but Kong hobbled along in its wake, nevertheless.

Choe Kwang was moved by his doggedness. That man will never change, Choe Kwang thought to himself.

I said to Choe Kwang: "Though told to go away, he still followed us to

make revolution. That shows what a good person he is. Let's do our best to help him, though it costs us a great deal of effort to do so." Bearing my advice in mind, Choe Kwang gave him individual training, including diving into the water from a springboard seven metres high.

I watched them from a distance. Kong was nervous that he might do belly-flops in the water. Anyhow, he was a man of special character. After the liberation of the country he served as my aide-de-camp and as a bodyguard to Choe Yong Gon, and commanded a battalion.

We also had canoeing on the Amur, using a one-man canoe, called an *amurochika* in Russian, with one paddle. The local Nanayian people were good at paddling this canoe. My men would compete in paddling to and from Khabarovsk.

We also had landing exercises. Since our country is sea-bound on three sides and has many rivers, river-crossing and landing operations were essential for future campaigns against Japan.

We once had a landing exercise aimed at Rajin Port.

Parachuting was more difficult than swimming. In this training course the women soldiers were more courageous than the men. There were some cowards among the men, but none among the women.

The first stage was a mock drill, in which the trainees would jump from a springboard into a pile of sawdust. The next stage was getting used to turning round on a revolving wheel. Women soldiers felt sick during this drill, but they never gave up.

Parachute practice took place on the vast plain around Voroshilov, where there was a landing-strip.

The trainees first had to learn how to fold their parachutes. Then they would ascend a tower about 50 metres high and descend by parachute. This trained them to turn their bodies once against the wind. Only then were they allowed to parachute from an aircraft. Ten to twenty soldiers would parachute first from an altitude of 1,000 metres, and later from 600 metres. The order to drop used to be given at the height of 800 metres.

The landing-strip was surrounded by wide sugar-beet fields. When we

landed, women working in the fields would run towards us, helping us draw up the chutes and peeling sugar beets for us.

They gave souvenir badges to those who recorded high scores in these drills. Choe Yong Jin from our contingent took the badge for the highest score.

I also took part in parachuting on several occasions. The drill produced a variety of episodes. Some lost their caps, some their boots, some got sprains, some got caught in trees, and so on.

Soldiers who weighed more than 80 kilogrammes or less than 40 kilogrammes were not allowed to participate in parachuting for reason of safety. An overweight person might fall too rapidly and get injured, and an underweight person might be blown far off course. Jon Sun Hui was so light that she was once blown higher than the plane. Kim Jung Dong also used to fly astray. He was a very small man. I once saw him hung up in a tree. When I helped him down, I found that he was as light as a child.

During the Fatherland Liberation War, Kim Jung Dong performed great exploits in the battles to liberate Seoul and Taejon, and was awarded the title of Hero of the Republic.

Parachuting was combined with air-borne operations, mostly from 1944.

The training in air-borne operations involved actions to destroy the resisting enemy while descending by parachute, rapid deployment after landing, the striking of the enemy from behind, and so on.

During parachute training, we lost some weight and we often felt hungry. Training was intensive, and on top of that, our food rations were reduced in order to support the front line after the outbreak of the Soviet-German War.

Under these circumstances, we cultivated idle land to obtain additional food. We planted potatoes, soy beans and vegetables. We benefited a lot from the side-line farm.

We also gathered edible herbs to supplement our diet. The area surrounding the training base was green with bracken, *Atractylodes japonica*, aralia shoots, and other edible herbs.

When we boiled soup with edible herbs, the Soviet doctors in the

dispensary warned us against eating them, as they might have been poisonous. However, after having a taste of the soup, they said it was delicious. When we told them that edible herbs were medicinal stuff, they began to ask for them.

Our comrades once quarrelled with a Jewish Russian major in the Soviet army, the man in charge of the supply work of the unit, in the fields while planting potatoes. The major was angry with our comrades who were planting cut-out eyes of potatoes, arguing that we would make a mess of potato farming. Our comrades retorted, saying that the yield in autumn would prove who was right.

That year we had a rich harvest of the crop. The potatoes planted whole yielded something like pebbles, whereas the cut-out eyes planted by our comrades produced fist-size potatoes. Only then did the major recognize our expertise in farming. Although that spring our contingent had boiled and eaten all the potatoes from which eyes had been cut out, we harvested twice as many potatoes as the others did.

Our comrades organized a hunting team to catch wild animals, and on holidays went fishing in the Amur. The Amur teemed with fish, and we caught one which weighed scores of kilogrammes.

In the spawning season, shoals of salmon came up the river. We caught them by casting nets and pickled them. We would take out their eggs and pickle them too.

We once caught so many wild animals and fish that we sent some to the western front.

We also conducted wireless communication drill at the training base.

There were some soldiers from northern Manchuria who had learned wireless communication in the second half of the 1930s, as they had frequented the Soviet Union. Pak Yong Sun and Ri Ul Sol were the first in our contingent to learn it, at the temporary base. On their return from Voroshilov where they had attended a short course in wireless communication for three months, they imparted their skill to others. Wireless communication was taught to men soldiers, including Ri Jong San and Ri O

Song, and almost all the women soldiers, including Kim Jong Suk, Pak Kyong Suk, Pak Kyong Ok, Kim Ok Sun, Ri Yong Suk, Wang Ok Hwan, Ri Jae Dok and Ri Min.

Most of the units that had been active previously in eastern and southern Manchuria could not make use of wireless communication. The training of wireless operators needed assistance from either the Comintern or the Soviets, which was not easy to get. As they had no wireless operator, they had captured wireless equipment on several occasions to no avail.

We had appointed messengers to Headquarters and all the units to ensure communication on foot. Our messengers had had to walk really long distances that had to be covered at the risk of their lives. No small number of them had been killed on their missions.

After his enlistment, Ri Chi Ho served as a Headquarters messenger for several years. While carrying out his mission to ensure communications for Headquarters, he had endured many hardships, suffering hunger and being subject to flogging when arrested. Braving these hardships, he had rendered distinguished services.

For all these sufferings, however, prompt communication was impossible. That was why we attached special importance to training in wireless communication.

Training the backbone of the signal corps was imperative not only for the building of the regular armed forces but also for the establishment of the communication system, the nerve system of the country, and for cultural and information services, in the liberated homeland.

In those days Kim Jong Suk, while participating in a variety of drills such as those for wireless communication and parachuting, went to various parts of the homeland to carry out small-unit actions there.

The women soldiers were exemplary in the wireless communication drill. They also participated equally with the men in the other drills such as for skiing, swimming, parachuting and river-crossing. Their training was very intensive. Even the Soviet officers said that the drills were several times more difficult than those they had gone through during their days at military

academies. However, all the women soldiers attended the drills without any complaint.

When starting parachute training, we had decided to exclude the women with children and those with weak constitutions. The women soldiers were all disappointed at this. An Jong Suk even came to me to protest in tears: “Some of us even left our children behind to come here and take part in training!”

When coming to the Far East region, she had left her little child at the wattle gate of a stranger’s house. Ri Jong In, too, was said to have left her daughter in the shed of someone else’s vegetable field, before coming to Russia.

They insisted that they should be allowed to participate in the parachute drill, saying that to hasten the day of national liberation was the only way for them to meet their dear children again.

Unable as she was to take a bit of the food served at the mess hall, Pak Kyong Suk was never absent from training in wireless communication. Even soon after delivery, she participated in the training course with great enthusiasm. She was so active in both her studies and exercises that the instructor of the wireless platoon spoke highly of Korean women, noting that they were indeed hard-working and persistent.

Pak Kyong Suk once accompanied Kim Chaek to the enemy-held area, carrying wireless equipment on her back, and engaging in small-unit activities for several months. She was very dexterous in operating the wireless.

Kim Jong Suk was also enthusiastic about her training. Once she sprained her ankle, but continued to take part in skiing training, although her leg was badly swollen. When I expressed my worry about her, she showed her concern about me, taking out a sugar cube wrapped in paper and saying: “If you do the drill with this in your mouth, you will feel better.”

What worried me most during the parachute drill was whether or not the underweight women would be able to land properly. However, they would open the chute in time and land right at the fixed spot. Some of them would put bricks into their knapsacks to add to their weight when parachuting.

This was the mettle of our fighters in their youth.

Overcoming all hardships with a smile for the future of the liberated

homeland was our joy and pleasure, and made our lives worthwhile.

Although the training was intense, and we could not get enough sleep and were not strong enough, we endured all the hardships and trials with a smile for the future of the liberated country.

Our veterans still hold those days dear.

Everyone has a time of youth. It is by no means easy, however, to spend one's youth so as to recollect it with a high sense of honour and pride even in the distant future. How valuable and noble it is to devote one's life to the cause of the country and the nation, overcoming all manner of hardships, full of ardour and fighting spirit!

I firmly believe that our young people, too, will make a staunch struggle for the motherland and revolution, braving difficulties and hardships, by inheriting the spirit of the martyrs who laid down their lives in the anti-Japanese revolution.

Anticipating the great event of national liberation when Japan and Germany were in decline, we channelled great efforts into the study of the homeland to build up the motive force of the Korean revolution. Without the correct theory and strategy and tactics of the Korean revolution, and without knowledge of the history and geography, the economy and culture, and the ethics and customs of the homeland, it would have been impossible to achieve independence by our own efforts, to build a new country, and to take an independent stand and attitude towards the revolution.

Most of our comrades, however, were not well-informed about their motherland, for they had been born in Manchuria. Born as he was in North Kyongsang Province, Pak Song Chol had left his hometown at the age of about ten and lived in Manchuria afterwards. Ri Ul Sol, too, though hailing from Songjin, had lived in Changbai from the time he crossed the Tuman as a child until he joined the guerrilla army.

Therefore, I decided to teach the soldiers the Juche-oriented line of the Korean revolution and about their motherland.

The problem, however, was a lack of books on Korea at the training base.

I obtained books published in Korea by giving assignments to those going

into the homeland for small-unit activities, or with the help of Soviet people. Once I obtained a book entitled *The Outline of Korean Geography*, and read it, which helped me a lot in my study of the geography of our country.

One day I gave Rim Chun Chu an assignment to draw a large map of Korea, adding that he should include in it all the famous mountains, rivers, plains, lakes, mineral deposits, and the specialities of all regions, as well as the scenic spots and places with cultural relics.

Rim drew the map with great efforts, by patching several pieces of white paper together.

During a political lecture, I put up this map and made a speech titled, *The Korean Revolutionaries Must Know Korea Well* to the political cadres and political instructors of the KPRA. In my speech I emphasized that the Korean revolutionaries must have a good knowledge of Korean history and geography, pointing out a few tasks for greeting the great event of the national liberation on our own initiative. After that, all the Korean soldiers of the IAF made a careful study of their motherland under the motto "The Korean Revolutionaries Must Know Korea Well."

I think it was around the Harvest Moon Day that we sat up deep into the night, talking about the homeland and our native places, looking up at the bright moon hanging over the forest.

The yearning and love for the motherland were the source of our inexhaustible strength and courage. We braced up and stepped up our study and training efforts.

In those days the anti-Japanese fighters fully assimilated the whole course of the curriculum one would normally learn at a regular university, while undergoing intense training that was almost beyond their physical strength. It was by no means easy to do so, but the sweat they shed and the efforts they made bore fruit in the liberated homeland.

Among those who worked with us after liberation were quite a few people who had graduated from noted universities. When I met some of the graduates of the Oriental Working People's Communist College, I found them not particularly informed of either Party-building or nation-building.

The anti-Japanese veterans were conversant with any duty.

When I entrusted Kim Chaek with the responsibility for the industrial sector, he ensured the reconstruction of the devastated national industries in a short span of time. An Kil, who was given the task of establishing and running an institute for training the military cadres necessary for the building of regular armed forces, fulfilled his task without much difficulty.

No one could match the former guerrillas in work among the masses or political work.

Throughout the anti-Japanese revolutionary struggle, we worked hard to make preparations for shouldering the future of the liberated motherland, looking into the bright tomorrow, always confident about the victory of the revolution.

When I proposed drawing up the blueprint for the reconstruction of Pyongyang City when the Fatherland Liberation War was still raging, some people were taken aback, saying that it was preposterous to talk of a blueprint for reconstruction when one could hardly know when the war would end. However, no sooner was the war over two years later than we could start reconstructing Pyongyang City without any delay, on the basis of the blueprint.

Revolutionaries must plan their work and push ahead with it in anticipation of events that will take place in the distant future, while dealing with the tasks in hand.

How good it is to rise above hardships, plan for the future and create life by anticipating approaching events, rather than to complain about difficulties! Compressing time and speeding up the coming of the future is characteristic of the positive spirit. When we were looking forward to the final victory of the anti-Japanese revolution, we constantly speeded up military and political training, to hasten the day of national liberation, full of revolutionary optimism and confidence.

Only those who work day and night for their motherland’s future, overcoming today’s difficulties with a smile, only those who plan the future for their posterity, thinking and studying ceaselessly, can become genuine communists and ardent revolutionaries.

# 2. The Flames of National Resistance Flare throughout the Country

The great leader evolved a far-sighted plan to integrate the general offensive of the KPRA, a national uprising and their joint operations behind enemy lines into a unified system for the final showdown with the Japanese imperialists. He put forward this plan as the strategic line for the country's liberation. His ambitious plan of accomplishing the great cause of national liberation by the general mobilization of the revolutionary armed forces and the entire nation was an expression of his unqualified trust in and expectations of our people, who had been awakened to political awareness in the flames of the anti-Japanese revolution.

It was impossible to win national independence relying only on the efforts of a few people with advanced ideas or of a small force of fighters. This was a historical lesson of the world revolutionary movement as well as of the national liberation movement in Korea.

From the day we started the anti-Japanese revolution we consistently asserted the importance of resistance by the whole people. By this resistance we meant the general mobilization of the entire nation for the anti-Japanese revolution by training them along revolutionary lines. In other words, we meant to liberate the country by means of the organized and active resistance of all the people throughout the country against the Japanese.

With regard to national resistance, we held that, in order to train all the people as revolutionaries, we had to enlighten and organize them, and that in order to defeat the Japanese imperialists by means of national resistance, we had to fully prepare the enlightened and organized elements among the people both politically and militarily.

We got down to preparations for national resistance when we established our base on Mt. Paektu and extended our armed struggle to the areas on the

Amnok and in the homeland, while working hard to build the Party, the united-front movement and mass organizations under the banner of the ARF. The Ten-Point Programme of the ARF calling for the accomplishment of national liberation through the general mobilization of the entire nation was, in effect, a declaration of national resistance.

I think it was after the outbreak of the Sino-Japanese War that we advanced the policy of national resistance as an independent line, and began to take practical measures to that end. We held meetings in the Paektusan secret camp and also in Caoshuitan and Sinhung to discuss the matter of national resistance against the Japanese. The September Appeal can be considered an appeal for national resistance.

When we moved to Mt. Paektu I also put forward the idea of organizing the Anti-Japanese People's Guerrilla Army of Northern Korea (AJPGANK).

We selected a number of people who had been tempered in the local organizations, and trained them at the training school on Mt. Kanbaek as the leadership personnel for national resistance, while at the same time putting great efforts into building more paramilitary organizations in the northern area and various other parts of the homeland, and expanding them.

Our political operatives in the homeland also organized workers' shock brigades and paramilitary corps in many parts of the country.

As the day of decisive battle approached, we speeded up the operational preparations for an all-people resistance.

At this moment, the commanding officers of the Korean Contingent held a meeting, at which the discussion was focussed on the preparations for the showdown. All the commanding officers expressed full support for my proposal that we should make every preparation to organize national resistance against the Japanese and achieve national liberation by our own efforts.

Later I set out the three-point line for national liberation on the basis of the review of the work of building the Party and mass organizations and the activities by the secret armed organizations in the homeland. This line was aimed at accomplishing the historic cause of national liberation by means of a

general offensive of the KPRA combined with a popular uprising and joint operations behind enemy lines.

This plan was completely feasible. What made me believe it feasible? My judgment was based upon the feelings of the Korean people, which were all turned to us. Many people were looking up to Mt. Paektu, and many others were flocking there. There was no shortage of people wanting to join the guerrilla army to become Kim Il Sung's soldiers. Those, who evaded conscription and the labour draft took refuge in the mountains, built smithies and made weapons, saying that they would fight to the end against the Japanese.

The public sentiment at that time found expression as follows: "We cannot live under the tyrannical rule of the Japanese any longer. We will rise in revolt and destroy the Japanese when Kim Il Sung's guerrilla army pushes into Korea. We must fight a decisive battle with the Japanese at the risk of our lives."

It was around this time that the Japanese police made a great commotion, alarmed by the appearance of the words, "Kim Il Sung, Commander of Korea's Independence", on the ceiling of the steerage of the *Koanmaru,* a ferry plying between Pusan and Shimonoseki, and "seditious scribbling" on the South Gate in Seoul: "Commander Kim Il Sung Will Soon Return to the Motherland in Triumph."

In the first half of the 1940s, the broad masses of people from all walks of life entrusted the destiny of the nation to us more than ever, eagerly waiting for us to liberate the country.

It is said that the people's will is God's will. The people's will represents their aspirations and wishes. If the people's will is in our favour, we can accomplish anything, no matter how arduous the task.

This was the reality we were counting on. The three-point line of national liberation was based on this reality.

The gist of the operational plan for the final battle was that our main force would make a rapid advance into the homeland and occupy all the provinces, fighting there on the one hand, and on the other issuing an appeal to the

whole nation in order to rouse the workers, peasants, and youth and students who were hiding in the mountains to rally around armed organizations and join the armed popular uprising to destroy the enemy and liberate the country.

This plan was certain to succeed. If we reinforced the revolutionary army trained in the anti-Japanese armed struggle, the backbone of our armed forces, with the patriotic youths and people in the homeland and then launched a determined campaign in all parts of the country, we would be fully able to liberate the country by our own efforts.

The point in question was how to mobilize the people for resistance at the decisive moment. That was not difficult, either. At the time of the March First Popular Uprising, two million people had turned out to cheer for independence. Just imagine how many people would turn out for resistance in case of a decisive battle!

Needless to say, this policy was not readily accepted by all. When we first proposed the line for national resistance, some people shook their heads dubiously, but most of us supported it, confident that the policy was certain to succeed.

Our policy for arming the entire nation astonished the commanding officers of the NAJAA. They asked us how we could propose such a venture when our country was a complete colony and we were waging the armed struggle mainly outside it.

I told them: "To arm the entire nation for national resistance is not our subjective idea, but the desire of the people themselves. We have simply adopted our people's desire and demand as our task."

In the first half of the 1940s, the Japanese imperialist ruling system was gradually becoming paralyzed. With the defeat of Japan in the Pacific War becoming certain, there appeared various forms of delinquency even among government officials.

Jo Myong Son, who had been to the homeland for small-unit actions gave me the following account: Once he had captured a policeman in a mountainous area. He asked the policeman why he had been wandering

around in a forest like an idler in such a period of emergency. The captive replied that he had gone hunting because he was in despair, as he had a foreboding that Japan would collapse before long.

That was the general mental state of the Japanese officials in those days, a sure sign that their ruling system was tottering.

This weakness in the enemy's ruling system presented an opportunity for our resistance organizations in the homeland to prepare resistance on a national scale.

Taking advantage of the enemy's weakness, our political operatives and the members of the resistance organizations sent either declarations or warning notes to the enemy officials irrespective of their positions, ranging from sub-county officials and lower-echelon policemen to provincial governors and the Governor-General in the top strata of the colonial government of Korea, and even to the Prime Minister and Emperor of Japan, striking terror into them.

In February Juche 32 (1943), the resistance organizations in the homeland sent warning notes to Japanese Prime Minister Tojo in relation to the introduction of the conscription system in Korea.

The warning note, sent in the name of all the young people of Pyoksong County, reads:

"To your Excellency Prime Minister Tojo, the Prime Minister's Official Residence, Tokyo City

...

"Korea will become independent.

"Come to your senses, Japan, our enemy. However hard you try to train soldiers through the introduction of the conscription system on the peninsula, the day we are waiting for will come soon. Give me arms. The Japanese are our enemy. ...

"Dedicated to our motherland Korea, we will resist our enemy, Japan, to the last, to the last moment of our lives, and even in our graves. We will ... join the army before anyone else to work off our deep-seated enmity, to resist the enemy, Japan, nay, to destroy her." (*Monthly Report by the Special Political Police*, p. 72, Public Security Section, Security Police Bureau, Ministry of the Interior, February Showa 18 (1943).)

Stepping up the preparations for national resistance, we paid special attention to the following points: One was to establish new temporary secret bases while building up the secret bases existing in the homeland into military and political bases for national resistance; the second was to send more small units and teams as well as political operatives into the homeland to prepare the forces of national resistance thoroughly for the operations to liberate the country, in keeping with the requirements of the new situation; and the third was to establish unified leadership over the national resistance forces in the homeland.

National resistance was inconceivable apart from an armed revolt, nor would it be successful without bases for activities. When formulating the line of national resistance, therefore, I paid primary attention to the work of building in the Rangnim and other major mountains secret bases that would be used for the operations and support of the KPRA as well as the strong points of the armed struggle by the national resistance forces.

As a result, many secret bases were established in the northeast region centring on Mt. Paektu, in the northern inland region centring on the area along the Amnok, and the Rangnim and Pujonryong Mountains, in the western and central regions, and in all other parts of the homeland.

In the early 1940s, in addition to these secret bases, we set up temporary secret bases of various forms and sizes at vantage points across the country that would be of strategic and tactical importance in carrying out the operations for national liberation, to meet the requirements of the new situation.

Giving priority to the establishment of the bases, we dispatched many small units, teams, and political operatives to the homeland. I also advanced deep into the homeland on more than one occasion, leading a small unit.

The small units, teams and political operatives we had sent into the border areas on the Tuman and the Amnok, into the central regions of Korea, including Seoul, into the southern regions of Korea, including Pusan and Jinhae, and to Japan, carried out brisk political and military activities, preparing the broad masses of people for national resistance against Japan.

An official document issued by the Japanese, dealing with the activities of the political operatives dispatched by the great leader, reads:

"Arrest of an Agitation Group Leader, Kim Il Sung's Subordinate

"An agitation group leader surnamed Kim, a faithful subordinate of Kim Il Sung, the leader of the insurgent Koreans in Manchuria who has long since been engaged in anti-Japanese activities, sneaked into Tumen, Jiandao Province, for the purpose of inciting rebellion, and carried out underground activities until he was arrested and put under strict investigation by the police authorities there. The objective of his infiltration and his activities that have been confirmed so far through the investigation are as follows:

"1) Objective of infiltration: To disturb the home front in Manchuria and Korea in the event of the outbreak of a Soviet-Japan War, organize a fifth column with Koreans, and obtain Japanese bank notes.

"2) Activities: Having entered Manchuria from Khabarovsk on the aforementioned mission as an agitation group leader under Kim Il Sung, he allured about 20 insurgent Koreans in Tumen.

"3) Background: As the fact that the headquarters of the fifth column is in Kyongsong (Seoul) has become clear, a close examination is now under way for detailed information." (*Monthly Report by the Special Political Police*, p. 82, Public Security Section, Security Police Bureau, Ministry of the Interior, February Showa 18 (1943).)

Another important task in speeding up the preparations for national resistance was to build a leadership capable of unified control of the resistance movement in the homeland.

After the formation of the Homeland Party Working Committee, groups of Party members were organized in many parts of the country. They gave guidance to the mass organizations. From the late 1930s, area Party committees were organized for unified control of the groups of Party members and anti-Japanese mass organizations spontaneously formed in many areas and started to function as regional leadership bodies.

For example, the Yonsa Area Party Committee was organized by Kim Jong Suk.

In the first half of the 1940s, an area Party committee composed of pioneer communists was organized and active in South Phyongan Province. This committee had subordinate groups of Party members in Pyongyang, Kaechon, Nampho and elsewhere, through which it guided the ARF and the national resistance organizations within the province.

The Chongjin Area Party Committee organized in North Hamgyong Province had many Party cells in the Nihon Iron Works and other factories in Chongjin.

As a result of our active military and political activities to defeat the Japanese imperialists by means of nationwide anti-Japanese resistance, the forces of national resistance grew quickly in the homeland in the first half of the 1940s. The Japanese imperialists claimed that they had discovered more than 180 anti-Japanese underground organizations within Korea in 1942, and that the total membership of these organizations amounted to 500,000. I think if the organizations which escaped the enemy's surveillance were added to this, the number would be much greater.

The common feature notable in the activities of the anti-Japanese organizations at home and abroad in those days was that most of them were developing into political and military organizations, and that their major objective was a popular uprising and armed resistance. In those days many fighting organizations overtly proclaimed their objectives of national resistance, popular uprising, armed revolt, and participation in the final offensive operations of the KPRA. They even named themselves either "Kim Il Sung Corps" or "Paektusan Association", stressing their direct connection with us.

The "Kim Il Sung Corps" which was organized in Seoul and extended its influence over the area around Mosulpho in Jeju Island and other parts of the homeland and Japan was remarkable in its objective and the mode of its activities as a national resistance organization in the closing period of the anti-Japanese revolution.

I think it was in about June 1945 that this organization became known to the public. At that time, the police department of Niigata Prefecture got a clue

about its activities among the Koreans who had been drafted to work as labourers in Japan, and made frantic efforts to ferret it out.

The “Kim Il Sung Corps” struggled with the objective of rallying the broad anti-Japanese masses and preparing them for resistance against the Japanese to participate in the final battle for national liberation, when our revolutionary army would advance to the homeland.

This organization struck roots in the major munitions factories, harbours, military construction sites, and other production sites.

According to a secret Japanese document, the corps publicized that the Pacific War would soon end in Japan’s defeat, that Korea would become independent, that Korea would adopt a political system under which all the people would live in equality and happiness without any discrimination between the rich and the poor, and that “Kim Il Sung would be the supreme leader of liberated Korea.”

Quite a few researchers are of the opinion that the large-scale revolt by the Korean workers at an airfield on Jeju Island in 1942 was masterminded by the “Kim Il Sung Corps”. I think there is some truth in that.

Here is an article carried in the American newspaper *New York Times*, dated July 18, Juche 31 (1942).

“KOREANS DAMAGE BIG JAPANESE BASE

“Workers Kill 142 of Air Force in Attack on Quelpart (Jeju Island), at Entrance to Yellow Sea (West Sea of Korea)

“Patriot Uprisings Go On

“WASHINGTON, July 17–Continuing active revolt in Korea against the Japanese resulted in heavy destruction to a Japanese air base on the Island of Quelpart, or Saishu, late in March. ...

“Quelpart Island is off the southern tip of the Korean Peninsula and commands the Strait of Korea and the entrance to the Yellow Sea (West Sea of Korea).

“On March 29, according to the reports, a force of Korean workers on the island attacked the air base. They destroyed the wireless station and set fire to four underground hangars. In the attack 142 Japanese pilots and mechanics were killed and another 200 burned or wounded.

“Two gasoline storage tanks and sixty-nine planes were also destroyed. The Japanese later killed all of the 400 Koreans who survived the fighting.

“On March 1, the reports said, Koreans dynamited three power plants in Northern Korea.”

The Paektusan Association was organized in Songjin (the present Kimchaek City), North Hamgyong Province, in the summer of 1942. According to a Japanese police report, the association was organized under the guidance of a man from Waseda University. The organization was said to have named itself after Mt. Paektu which was our base of operations. The document also said that this association had attempted to join the People’s Revolutionary Army and worked to develop national consciousness, for the purpose of achieving Korea’s independence.

In the Pyongyang area there was a resistance organization named the Fatherland Liberation Corps, of which my cousin Kim Won Ju was a member.

It was an active resistance organization with the main objective of rising in armed revolt in response to the operations of the KPRA to liberate the country.

It expanded its ranks among the workers, peasants, youths and students, and other people in Pyongyang, as well as in industrial areas and the countryside in the central and western parts of our country. The organization struck roots even in police establishments and the enemy’s government and public offices.

Its policy of action was daring and enterprising. For example, it planned to destroy the organs that were pressing young Koreans into military and labour services; it also planned to get in touch with our unit to obtain weapons and send its elite members to participate in the armed struggle.

It planned to attack police stations and sub-county offices, take back grain which had been delivered, seize documents on military and labour draft work, destroy transport facilities and build a forge on Mt. Kuwol to make swords, spears, and other weapons. All this shows how ambitious its plan of operations was. The leadership of this corps even elaborated an idea of

planting its agents in the Japanese army and munitions factories.

According to Won Ju, the Fatherland Liberation Corps was organized at Tudan-ri.

Won Ju was arrested for having snatched a pistol from the enemy in the closing days of Japanese rule. After his arrest, policemen pounced upon his house almost every day in search of the pistol he had hidden. When they arrested him, the policemen were said to have clamoured that they had captured Kim Il Sung's cousin.

Among the resistance organizations in the homeland, the relatively large ones were the secret society formed in the Nihon Iron Works and the armed-revolt society made up of graduates of Kyongsong Imperial University.

The secret society formed in the Nihon Iron Works was an organization made up mainly of workers of this factory under the guidance of a political operative dispatched by one of our small units.

It is not accidental that in the early 1940s an organization for the reconstruction of the Communist Party came into being in the Nihon Iron Works. Quite a few of the leading figures of this organization belonged to the old generation in view of their backgrounds in the communist movement, and had been behind bars more than once owing to their involvement in labour or peasant unions.

The secret society in the Nihon Iron Works made preparations for realizing its main objective, which was to rise in armed revolt in cooperation with the advance of the KPRA into the homeland. It built a secret base in the Puyun area, where it stored weapons, food supplies and medicines, and printed leaflets and pamphlets. It organized action teams in the major industries and even formulated a concrete action plan that specified the date of and the signal for the beginning of the armed revolt, and the places from which to wrest weapons, as well as the procedure for this purpose.

This society also did a useful job of sabotage to slow down the wartime production of the Japanese imperialists, until it was finally uncovered.

This resistance organization had a bold plan to capture an anti-aircraft gun

of the Japanese army stationed in the vicinity of the factory.

The Anti-Japanese Association in this plant, too, launched a struggle to frustrate iron production at the same time as efforts to stop pig iron from being shipped to Japan. Thanks to its efforts, ships waiting to be loaded with pig iron were often delayed at Chongjin Port for several days.

The armed-revolt society formed in Kyongsong (Seoul) was a large and formidable organization. It included many communists of the older generation as well as a large number of intellectuals. I think it had more intellectual members than any other secret society in the homeland. This organization was also called the Songdae (abbreviation for Kyongsong Imperial University–Tr.) Secret Society. The incident that was widely talked about as the "Songdae incident" among the people before liberation was the work of this organization.

The man who masterminded this organization was one of our operatives.

Both Kim Il Su and So Jung Sok, who formed the armed-revolt society in the Kyongsong area, were veteran communists who had been well-known to me since my days in Jilin.

Kim Il Su had once served as a company commander, along with Ri Yong, the son of Ri Jun, in the Korean Battalion of the Red Guards in the Far East region. I was told he had taken part in several battles to destroy the White army, and rendered distinguished services. In the early 1920s he had also been a member of the Koryo Communist Party headed by Ri Tong Hui.

He had also engaged in the activities to reconstruct the Korean Communist Party, and later said that he would never call at the Comintern again with a potato seal, though he still wanted to reconstruct the party, I was told.

He agreed with an open mind to our contention that the party should be built by the method of forming grassroots organizations first, through work among the masses and then organizing the higher echelons, instead of the old method of forming the central body and declaring its inauguration first, and then organizing subordinate organizations.

Later he had taken refuge in Manchuria and worked with the East

Manchuria Special District Committee, before getting arrested by the Japanese police and imprisoned for several years.

After serving his prison term, he came to Northeast China and visited many places in search of our unit, I was told. Failing to meet us, he returned to Korea and immersed himself in the working class.

Obviously he expunged the mistakes of his past, in view of the fact that he attached importance to the working class.

Both So Jung Sok and his brother So Wan Sok are old acquaintances of mine.

Originally, So Jung Sok had belonged to the Seoul group and then transferred to the M-L group. When he was in Jilin he was on intimate terms with Hwang Paek Ha, Hwang Kwi Hon's father.

It was when he was engaged in youth work in Jilin that I got to know him. Since he was living in the neighbourhood of Jang Chol Ho's house, where I was boarding, I became acquainted with him. At that time we had a lot of arguments.

Later, he was said to have given up factional strife. When all others transferred themselves to the CPC, in accordance with the principle of one party for one country, he still stuck to his position to the last, carrying on activities for the reconstruction of the party. Then he was arrested in action and kept behind bars for several years. He was strong in his convictions and principles.

Even after liberation the two brothers worked hard for national reunification and the revolution in south Korea.

The resistance fighters in the homeland who had formed the armed-revolt society in Seoul, expanded the organization to the Hungnam Nitrogenous Fertilizer Factory and other factories, mines and schools in many parts of the country.

The armed-revolt society in Seoul established a secret base for its activities and carried out a wide scope of activities ranging from the acquisition of weapons and the issuing of publications to the collection of military information. It even taught its members how to handle weapons and gave them military drills.

The students of Kyongsong Imperial University, the only university in Korea during Japanese rule, were considered geniuses, and most of them were sons and daughters of the rich. But the Japanese did not establish the university to enlighten the Koreans. When Koreans launched a campaign to set up their own private university, the Japanese prohibited it, but instead set up a university to produce underlings for their colonial rule, calling it an "imperial university".

It was amazing that an armed-revolt society sprang from such a university.

An Hyong Jun also formed national resistance organizations in Seoul, and fought courageously. From his early days he had engaged in the anti-Japanese youth movement in the northern border area under the guidance of my uncle Hyong Gwon.

Under the cover of operating a sort of stock company on Jongno Street in Seoul, with subordinate enterprises, he promoted the work of forming organizations, while working in a big way to raise funds for the revolution. He formed national resistance organizations among the lumberjacks and raftsmen of his subordinate enterprises.

In cooperation with several comrades, he bought an insolvent Japanese tannery dirt cheap, and turned it into a supply base and rendezvous for the armed-revolt society. The tannery made a profit under his management, and he used this money to purchase weapons and the like, I was told.

After liberation, he served as the first chief of the information department of the People's Committee of Seoul City.

Together with Kim Chaek, I met him at the office of the Provisional People's Committee of North Korea in the spring of 1946.

Ri Kuk Ro and other scholars, who had been associated with the Korean Language Association, formed their own organization and waged a sturdy struggle.

The comrades hailing from North Hamgyong Province often talk proudly of the armed corps of the province, such as the Kkachibong People's Armed Corps in Hoeryong, the Worker-Peasant Armed Corps on Mt. Kom, and the

People's Armed Corps in Rajin. It is natural that they take pride in them, for those armed corps played a considerable role.

The Paekui Society, made up of young workers at the Musan Mine, performed information services and conducted struggle, systematically listening to radio broadcasts from the Soviet Union in Korean.

There was the Patriotic Corps in Cholsan, the Anti-Japanese Armed Corps of the Sunan Iron Works, and other armed corps with various names all across the country.

Many of them were organized by people who had once worked with us or who had been dispatched by us.

The resistance organizations active in the Hungnam area under our influence worked at the risk of their lives to frustrate the Japanese imperialists' top-secret scheme to develop a weapon of mass destruction, with the result that the project never materialized before Japan's defeat.

In the Hochon area, South Hamgyong Province, where Ri Kwi Hyon, who in his early days had once taken part in the building of anti-Japanese mass organizations in the Phungsan area along with Pak In Jin and Ri Chang Son, was active on a mission, the workers on a power station construction site and many other patriots formed an organization and waged a daring struggle.

A national resistance organization was even formed within the Japanese aggressor army.

You are probably well aware of the famous incident of mass desertion in 1944 by young Koreans who had been drafted into the navy at Jinhae. Convinced that the war would end in the defeat of the Japanese imperialists, they said they would rather join Kim Il Sung's army and fight under him to make a contribution to Korea's independence than die in vain as draftees of the doomed armed forces.

When I was on a visit to China one year, Zhou En-lai and Peng De-huai told me that during the anti-Japanese war a good many young Koreans in the Japanese army had come over to their side with their arms and requested that they be sent to Kim Il Sung's army, but that owing to unavoidable

circumstances they had not complied with their request, and instead transferred them to the Volunteers Corps in North China.

In the 30th division of the Japanese army stationed in Pyongyang young Koreans were said to have formed an anti-Japanese armed student-soldier corps and planned to join the KPRA en masse.

This armed corps was a well-formed organization. It had two detachments under it; and each detachment had four or five subordinate units under it.

It is said that at first the corps was uncertain about its course of action, but at last it got in touch with us and began to act in the right direction.

This corps had a very ambitious action plan. They planned to desert their barracks on the Harvest Moon Day and assemble at the foot of Pukdae Hill in Yangdok County, and then move over mountain ranges to the deep forests around Pochonbo, capturing weapons, ammunition and food by attacking police stations and gendarmes.

Then, they intended to reinforce themselves with conscription and labour draft evaders who were hiding in the mountains, build a base for their activities, and launch guerrilla actions until they could link up with the main force of the KPRA to take part in the operations to liberate the country.

At the final operations meeting they made preparations down to every detail to join the KPRA under the motto “To Mt. Paektu”. But the plan came to naught due to the carelessness of one of them.

In those days the Japanese military clamoured that that was the most mutinous plot since the foundation of their army.

A considerable number of communists who had been associated with various organizations in the homeland also joined us in the decisive battle to destroy the Japanese imperialists, in support of the line of national resistance.

Ri Hyon Sang got to know about our policy of national resistance when he was serving a term in Sodaemun Prison in connection with a communist group incident. He heard about it from Pak Tal, Kwon Yong Byok, and Ri Je Sun, who were in the same prison.

He immediately went on hunger-strike, aiming to get out of the prison by all means and form a resistance corps for the looming showdown with the Japanese.

Released on parole because of illness caused by his 20-odd-day hunger-strike, he recuperated for some time and then went to Mt. Jiri, where he formed a small armed unit with the young people and students who were in hiding there to evade conscription and labour draft.

There Ri Hyon Sang built his base in the form of a liberated zone. It is said that he dispatched a messenger to Mt. Paektu to get in touch with us for joint operations.

Jo Tong Uk, whom we had sent to Seoul, also made good preparations for national resistance. The June 6 Union he formed had several subordinate legal organizations like a mountaineering club and a football club. It established close ties with other anti-Japanese organizations in Seoul, I was told. Even after liberation, he remained in Seoul, doing his best to steer the youth movement in south Korea in the way we intended. As soon as he came to Pyongyang, he called on me to report the results of his activities over the previous ten years.

Kim Sam Ryong was one of those who formed secret organizations in prison and fought to implement our policy of national resistance. During his time in Sodaemun Prison in Seoul he organized a communist circle and launched a campaign against the Japanese imperialists' coercive conversion attempts. He had been put behind bars due to his involvement in the same communist group incident as Ri Hyon Sang had. After the formation of the communist group, he had worked as the chief of the organizational department of the group. The communist group in Seoul was an organization set up to reconstruct the Korean Communist Party.

Many of those who had been involved in this group supported our leadership of the communist movement in the homeland, and later joined the national resistance movement.

As I said previously, our operatives infiltrated the very heart of Seoul, distributed the ten-point programme among the members of the communist group and informed them of the battle achievements of the KPRA.

The communist group in Seoul had different trade unions in factories and enterprises in the Seoul area under its control, and conducted various forms of anti-Japanese struggle.

Kim Sam Ryong, who had organized and guided the struggle, did not yield to the enemy even behind bars. After coming over to the north from Seoul, Pak Tal often told me that Kim Sam Ryong was a revolutionary with a strong sense of duty and principle. According to Pak Tal, Kim was one of the few comrades who resisted the Japanese to the last.

Like Ri Hyon Sang, Kim Sam Ryong also met Pak Tal in Sodaemun Prison. The two men seemed to have become close friends in the prison. It was Kim Sam Ryong who took Pak Tal to Seoul Hospital after the latter's release from prison, and took care of him devotedly. When Pak Tal was coming to Pyongyang at our invitation, Kim arranged everything for Pak's trip. Through Pak Tal, he sent me a letter of greetings.

Kim Sam Ryong was a Party worker with strong convictions and skilful organizational ability, a patriot who devoted all his life to the country, the nation and the communist cause.

When the South Korean Workers' Party was outlawed, we worried about his safety, and advised him to come to the north without hesitation if the situation became critical. However, he did not quit his post, but continued to carry on Party work in south Korea responsibly underground. Betrayed by turncoats, he was arrested by the south Korean police and executed.

In the first half of the 1940s, our revolution prepared all the people to the full in anticipation of the great event of national liberation. What made the enemy's ruling system crumble so quickly in our country in August 1945? It was because our national resistance organizations rose up in all parts of the country and destroyed the Japanese ruling machinery.

Soviet publications write about the anti-Japanese struggle activated in the first half of the 1940s by the national resistance forces organized in all parts of the Korean peninsula. One of them reads in part:

"During the Pacific War the anti-Japanese movement in Korea gained a higher momentum, putting Japan off-balance.

"Cases of sabotage in Japanese military establishments were recorded in large numbers. For instance, seven waggons loaded with military supplies were blown up and a paper mill burnt

down in Sinuiju in February 1942. In Unggi (present-day Sonbong) six oil tanks were blown up and oil depots were burnt down. On Jeju Island Korean workers employed at a Japanese air base destroyed 69 Japanese planes. ...” (*Korea*, pp. 43-44, V. Yarovoy, the Soviet Naval Forces Press, September 1945.)

During the preparations for the final offensive to liberate the country, our nation exerted all its efforts.

The patriotic forces of our nation were united and mobilized to the fullest for national resistance against the Japanese. This was a new development of our revolution in the first half of the 1940s as well as a prominent success.

It can be said that the two forces, communism and nationalism, opposed to each other, came into collaboration in this period, transcending differences of ideology.

Was Ri Yong a communist? No. He was originally a nationalist, and, what is more, belonged to the old generation like my father. However, he worked with us. A true patriot does not take issue with anybody about communism or nationalism.

Was Kim Ku a communist? No. He was a nationalist as well as a die-hard anti-communist. But he even appealed to the Korean compatriots in the United States to send us the war supplies. Later, he even dispatched a messenger to establish a military link-up with us.

It was not because they espoused communism that the Korean students studying in Japan vowed that they would become Kim Il Sung’s soldiers. It was because they knew that the way to Mt. Paektu was the way to patriotism and to national independence.

Arguing about ideologies and doctrines is no way to national unity. We must find a common denominator and make it absolute, burying our doctrinal differences, as we did when heralding the great event of national liberation in the first half of the 1940s. Hence the importance of the experiences and lessons of the anti-Japanese revolution.

# 3. The Breakthrough in the Operations against Japan

During the run-up to the operations against Japan, numerous soldiers of the KPRA died heroically in the course of carrying out small-unit reconnaissance under the banner of national liberation and proletarian internationalism.

The soldiers of the KPRA who took part in reconnaissance work made a breakthrough in the operations against Japan through their self-sacrificing struggle.

The following recollection of the great leader Comrade Kim Il Sung helps us to look back upon the heroic exploits performed by the soldiers of the KPRA in their reconnaissance activities in the enemy areas.

When preparing for the final operations against Japan to liberate the country, the KPRA took the lead in making a breakthrough.

The activities of the KPRA for the preparation and execution of the operations against Japan were carried out directly through the chain of command of its main force as a component of the IAF, as well as through its detachments under the control of the IAF.

To step up reconnaissance work, especially joint reconnaissance by the IAF, in preparation for operations was a pressing need in view of the prevailing situation at the time.

In order to obtain information about the strategy of the Japanese imperialists, it was necessary to conduct intensive reconnaissance in Manchuria and Korea, especially in the areas bordering on the Soviet Union, as well as widespread intelligence activities in Japan proper.

In the first half of the 1940s, when we were anticipating the great event of national liberation, we were faced with an immensely heavy task of reconnaissance, incomparably greater than in the previous period.

At that time we were preparing for a final showdown with the Japanese imperialists. That required reconnaissance of a large number of targets. Previously we used to select a single or a few prize targets at a time, mainly for raiding, demolition or ambush, so reconnaissance had been limited to these targets. But now the enemy's military posts, fortified areas, airfields, gun positions and all the other hostile elements had to be reconnoitred. Even the seats of reactionary organizations, their structural characteristics and the sentiments of the public came within the range of our reconnaissance.

Another reason why we attached importance to reconnaissance in this period was that the Japanese army had stepped up its movements, and there were frequent changes in its chain of command.

When Germany started to invade the Soviet Union, the Japanese military dispatched hundreds of thousands of troops to Manchuria as reinforcements for the Kwantung Army, in an attempt to push north if the Nazi army occupied Moscow and threw the Soviet Union into confusion.

Seeing the Nazi army bogged down, unable to occupy Moscow, the cunning Japanese military judged that a push north was premature, and shifted most of their forces massed in Manchuria to the south, attacking Pearl Harbour and occupying Singapore, in pursuance of their policy of "defending the north and attacking the south". This entailed the movement of troops, weapons and equipment.

The soldiers of the KPRA trekked about the vast expanse of Manchuria and the homeland, collecting a lot of information necessary for the operations to liberate the country.

I considered most important information about the fortresses and fortified areas on the borders between Korea and the Soviet Union, between Korea and Manchuria, and between the Soviet Union and Manchuria. But for this information, it would have been impossible for us to carry out the operations against Japan as successfully as we did. It was because we had scouted the enemy so thoroughly that the Kwantung Army, the elite of the enemy forces, that had bragged of being the "son of tiger", surrendered without offering any resistance worth mentioning.

It was natural that the Japanese boasted of these fortified areas as impregnable. The world knew well that the French Maginot Line and the German Siegfried Line were imposing fortifications, but not much was known about the Japanese fortresses.

The Japanese fortifications covered a distance of 1,000 kilometres in all. Over a long period of time, the Japanese had constructed them with the use of huge amounts of materials. Each fortified stretch consisted of 500 concrete and earthen pillboxes on the average, in addition to command posts, observation posts, artillery positions, all sorts of troop shelters and combat trenches, communication trenches, and anti-tank and anti-personnel barriers–a network of fortifications tight enough to prevent the infiltration of an ant. The fact that the main force of the Kwantung Army was positioned in these fortifications shows how much strategic importance the Japanese military attached to them.

That was why we put priority efforts into the reconnaissance of these fortifications.

When I was moving in command of a small unit to and from Manchuria and the homeland, our team once passed through the northern flank of the fortifications at Dongxingzhen, where we often encountered the enemy's pillboxes and well-covered troop shelters. When we woke up early in the morning from our bivouac overnight, we often found ourselves either on the roof of an underground structure or near a concrete pillbox built by the enemy.

Once we bivouacked at the foot of a mountain where an enemy's sentry post was situated.

I woke my men up quietly and took them out of range of the enemy's observation. When I asked them during breakfast if they knew that they had slept right under an enemy sentry post, they were wide-eyed with surprise.

For the reconnaissance of a fortified area I used to dispatch several parties of scouts. For instance, responsibility for observing the fortifications at Kyonghung (present-day Undok) was given to a dozen scouting parties. Similarly in Hunchun, Dongxingzhen and Dongning.

Our scouts in those days would penetrate the enemy's fortifications and return with even the scraps of concrete they had chipped from a pillbox.

A piece of string or a ruler could be used to measure the size of a concrete pillbox or the calibre of a gun, but it was indeed difficult beyond imagination to take away concrete scraps, unnoticed by the enemy's sentry. Our comrades, however, made a fine job of it.

Our comrades reconnoitred not only the fortifications in the border area but also those in Rajin, Chongjin, Wonsan and those in Jinhae and Ryosu, as far as the southern tip of the homeland.

The scouts discovered everything that needed to be detected–the layout of the fortifications, number of guns, landing-strips, planes and troops, harbour facilities, tonnage of enemy warships, the procedures of entry into harbours, the location of communication centres, depots of military supplies, and so on.

In scouting the fortifications and fortified areas, O Paek Ryong and his party, including Kim Chol Man, Han Chon Chu, and Kim Hyok Chol, performed outstanding exploits. This party carried out dozens of reconnaissance missions in the homeland.

Initially they made use of pigeons for communication, for want of wireless equipment. Reaching their destinations, they would write a report on a slip of paper, put it into a tiny aluminium cylinder attached to a pigeon's leg, and let the bird loose, so reporting their arrival. But from 1942 onward, most of the small units and scouting parties that infiltrated into the homeland and Manchuria made use of wireless equipment.

Entering the homeland, they would wear ordinary civilian clothes. They would subsist on rations they carried with them and would travel on foot, avoiding trains, buses or even horses.

We familiarized the scouts with the geography, customs and dialects of their destinations.

The enemy guards were always vigilant against the infiltration of the small units and parties of the KPRA across the Tuman and the northern border. They would stretch something like thread over the hillocks through which the small units or parties might possibly infiltrate, and keep constant

watch. When they found the thread broken, they used to order out the soldiers and policemen stationed there as well as the local inhabitants for searches. Occasionally they would discover the footprints of our scouts.

O Paek Ryong's scouting party had many hair-raising experiences.

His party once encountered a rabid element of the Home Guard on the Josul Pass on their way from Unggi (present-day Sonbong) to Kyonghung (present-day Undok). Finding his dead body the following morning, the enemy made a thorough search of the pass even by ordering out hundreds of the local inhabitants.

Even when they saw our comrades hiding in the thicket of oaks, the local people feigned ignorance.

That day Kim Chol Man hung on a branch of an oak tree a slip of paper with an inscription reading, "We are the revolutionary army fighting for Korea's independence."

Reading the notice, the inhabitants whispered among themselves before shouting that there was nobody there, and proceeding to another valley.

O Paek Ryong's party set up many temporary secret bases during their work in the homeland. The secret bases on Mt. Poroji, at Jagunkamaewon and on Mt. Chonghak were established by them.

From these bases, our scouts carried out work among the masses on their own initiative, during which they got to know many good people.

Our comrades persuaded an old charcoal burner to obtain information and buy newspapers and magazines for them. When the old man became familiar with information collection, they gave him an assignment to scout the ports at Chongjin and Wonsan. Staying at a relative's house in Wonsan, the old man scouted the fortress there for a long time, obtaining important information for O Paek Ryong's reconnaissance party.

O Paek Ryong had enlisted in his scouting activities a man who had been farming and burning charcoal deep in the forest of Mt. Poroji. This man spoke Japanese quite well, so O Paek Ryong trained him for some time and then dispatched him to Japan. In those days the Japanese army used to ship horses from that region to Japan every autumn. When they did so they would

select Koreans to escort the horses. O Paek Ryong got this man to slip into the ranks of the horse escorts. This man also tried hard to gain information about the sea routes between Rajin and Niigata, and between Chongjin and Tsuruga.

What was characteristic of the activities of O Paek Ryong's party was that the range of their activities was wide and the information they obtained was very accurate.

Even information on the fortifications in Jinhae, Masan, Pusan, and other areas on the southern tip of Korea was obtained by agents dispatched by O's party. One agent sent to Pusan was said to have carried out his mission while working as a dealer in miscellaneous goods. One of our operatives also was active in the fortress in Ryosu.

O's party conducted their reconnaissance activities on a large scale, yet in a skilful and accurate way. The landing operations at the major ports of Rajin, Unggi, and Chongjin on the east coast for the war against Japan were planned by the Soviet army, based entirely on the information obtained by O's party, which made reconnaissance of the ports in a daring and unique way.

Kim Hyok Chol was a hero of the KPRA produced by this reconnaissance party. He died on his tenth mission to the homeland. One of his group of three men on that mission was suffering from arthritis. The group carried out their mission successfully, but got into trouble because the sick man could hardly walk. Kim Hyok Chol carried this man on his back. As it was snowing heavily they plodded along with great difficulty, and because they were late reaching the rendezvous across the river, their guide there had withdrawn.

The leader of the group went down to a village to obtain food for his comrades, who had been starving for days. Meanwhile, Kim Hyok Chol did his best for the sick comrade, but the latter died.

Kim Hyok Chol himself was so exhausted that he was reduced to crawling through the snow. Before long, he too died. Many soldiers died of hunger like him during the anti-Japanese armed struggle.

The following spring local villagers found his body, and buried it by the Tuman River. Beside him they buried the sick man he had tried to save. It is

said that Kim Hyok Chol was still grasping his pistol when he died, so the local people must have known that he and his comrade were guerrillas.

Kim Hyok Chol had been recruited by Kim Jong Suk during her underground activities in Taoquanli. He was very courageous and loyal. The volunteers from Taoquanli all fought courageously.

The fortifications in Kyonghung were scouted by Son Thae Chun's party. They also worked efficiently.

They collected a lot of information from a temporary secret base they had set up on the mountain at the back of Unggi. When surrounded by the enemy in the summer of 1942, Son Thae Chun fought them barehanded, before dying a heroic death.

He had been transferred to our main force from the Helong guerrilla unit. In our unit, he had served as a squad leader and then a platoon leader. Pak Yong Sun and Kim Ju Hyon, who hailed from Helong, used to praise him a lot, saying that he was intelligent and upright, had strong convictions and principles, and was full of ardour.

Their praise was no exaggeration. Son was greatly loved by his comrades. In terms of his service record in the guerrilla army, he was a veteran like Kim Ju Hyon. He was a handsome man with wavy hair.

The following episode shows what sort of man he was.

When he was living in Helong he was engaged to marry a girl. But misfortune befell them when the girl's brother, a revolutionary, was arrested and imprisoned and, to make matters worse, the girl's family got their house foreclosed by the landlord and had to live in a hut where the bier and other funeral equipment were kept by the village.

In those days Son Thae Chun was doing YCL work at Changrenjiang. The plight of his fiancee's family grieved him sorely.

However, he had no means to help her out. He racked his brains and called at the house of a man called Kim, a YCL member, in a nearby village. He met Kim's father and asked him if he would give him an ox in exchange for his introduction of a girl who could be a good daughter-in-law. Interested in the "good daughter-in-law", Kim's father replied that he would not object

to the idea if Son would pay for the ox in a few years' time. By a "good daughter-in-law" Son meant his fiancee.

Son sold the ox he had obtained in this way and paid off the debt of his fiancee's family to help them get back their house. Thus he saved her family from the crisis. Only then did he meet his fiancee and tell her everything.

At first the girl protested in tears that she would never marry a stranger. Son persuaded her, saying, "Why should I be willing to let you marry a stranger? But can we not sacrifice our love for the sake of your father, mother, elder brother, elder sister, and younger brothers and sisters who are crying over their ill-treatment by the landlord? Please don't object to my idea any more." The girl just sobbed and cried sadly, making no further remark.

As bad luck would have it, however, the enemy's "punitive" force pounced upon the village on the day of her marriage, causing pandemonium in the village and driving both the bridegroom and bride to flee from the house. With all the family scattered, the bridegroom joined the guerrilla army and the bride remained in the enemy-held area, continuing her work in the YCL.

Son Thae Chun, too, joined the guerrilla army. The bridegroom Kim fell in battle while serving with the Wangqing guerrillas. The girl, who had suffered one misfortune after another, lived alone for the rest of her life, unable to forget Son, I was told.

I always used to send Son Thae Chun on difficult missions. He took part in every major battle I organized and commanded, among them the battles at Jiansanfeng, Musan and Hongqihe, each time displaying unrivalled courage and heroism. During the battle at Hongqihe he carried out his duty responsibly as a frontline scout.

Like O Thae Hui's in Wangqing, Son Thae Chun's family was a revolutionary family who laid down their lives in the war against the Japanese. Son Thae I, Son Thae Un, Son Thae Ryong and many other brothers of his fell in action while fighting in the guerrilla army and revolutionary organizations.

Kim Hak Song died while reconnoitring the fortifications at Kyonghung.

He was also surrounded by the enemy as Son Thae Chun had been. He handed over the information he had gathered to Kim Pong Sok and lured the enemy towards himself to his last moment.

Han Thae Ryong's reconnaissance party participated in scouting the fortresses at Chongjin and Ranam. They carried out their mission by disguising themselves sometimes as Japanese gendarmes, sometimes as shoemakers and sometimes as rickshaw pullers.

However well they disguised themselves and however skilfully they acted according to the circumstances, they were unable to gain information on an anti-aircraft artillery position on a mountain because of strict surveillance by the enemy. Their object was to ascertain the calibres of the guns and their number, but it was difficult to approach the area.

One day they saw an old man pulling a handcart up the hill towards the position of the guns. In sympathy for the old man, they pushed the cart from behind. He thanked them and, hearing Han Thae Ryong lamenting their lot of "wandering and begging", he sympathized with him, saying that the Koreans could live only when the Japanese perished. Not missing this chance, Han said, pointing at the gun position: "When they have so many guns, why should they perish?" With a wry smile on his face, the old man replied, "Most of those guns on that mountain are fake, you know. Only a few of them are real; the rest are all made of wood. They used to cut the trees here, strip them of branches and paint them, and carry them to the position." The old man knew the disposition of all the enemy forces in the Chongjin area, the times of arrival and departure of the ships at the Chongjin Port and the details of the cargo they transported.

What the old man said agreed exactly with information obtained through other channels, I was told.

Pak Kwang Son's and Hong Chun Su's parties did most of the scouting of the fortified areas and fortresses in Onsong, Kyongwon, Kyonghung and other parts of the northern border region.

Pak Kwang Son's scouting party combined reconnaissance skilfully with work among the masses. While concentrating on reconnaissance, they never

neglected political work aimed at educating the masses along revolutionary lines. Their efficient work among the masses encouraged the people to help them in carrying out their reconnaissance.

In Onsong, Unggi, Kyongwon, Kyonghung, and Rajin there were many organizations we had formed from the early 1930s. Pak's party were able to obtain much information because they set these organizations in motion again.

After liberation, recalling his days of small-unit actions, Pak Kwang Son said that his scouting party owed a great deal of their success to the inhabitants of Onsong during their activities in the northern area of North Hamgyong Province. They found that the inhabitants were either organization members who had been ceaselessly assisting the guerrilla army, living under the great influence of the "Jilin Wind" and "Jiandao Wind" from the early 1930s or their descendants. He also said that the village headman with whom they had joined hands unexpectedly in Onsong was a member of an underground organization. The village headman would warn them not to cross the Tuman on such and such a night, because an instruction had been issued to guard the ferry strictly. He also told them that they would find such and such a place safe to tap a telephone giving them necessary information.

Among those who helped Pak's party, there was a man serving as a corporal in the gendarme squad stationed in Namyang, I was told. It was rare for a Korean to become a corporal in the Japanese gendarmerie. There were some Koreans like Hong Jong U working as assistant gendarmes, but the rank of corporal was exceptional for Koreans.

Pak Kwang Son's party decided to win over the corporal. They found that he was a special member of the ARF who had been in touch with Son Jang Chun since the early 1940s. After the death of Son Jang Chun while carrying out small-unit activities in Kyongwon County, the corporal had been lying low, waiting for the re-establishment of connection with the People's Revolutionary Army.

The corporal handed over to the scouting party every piece of information he had obtained from the gendarmerie. He also provided security for the

members of the small units of the KPRA and of revolutionary organizations.

When one small unit was arrested, the corporal got them set free by claiming that they were undercover agents of his gendarme unit.

Namyang was a relay point between the fortifications in the border area and Japan proper. The important road and railway as well as the communications network linking the northern border area of our country with Northeast China ran mainly through Namyang, and even the material supplies for aggression on the continent had to pass through Namyang to get to Northeast China.

In the light of this, it was a great success in the activities in the enemy area that this scouting party drew the corporal in Namyang into intelligence service for us.

The small units and groups of the KPRA boldly enlisted even the servants of the enemy organs in reconnaissance. An office boy of the police station in Sosura rendered great help to our men who were scouting the fortifications in Kyonghung and the fortresses in Rajin. After gaining the confidence of the chief of the police station through his devoted service, he collected various bits of information, and even got access to a top-secret military document in the end. Even among the Japanese policemen in Chonghak, which Han Chang Bong and Jo Myong Son frequented during their activities in the northern border area, there was a man who, under their influence, gave active assistance to our intelligence activities.

Through their reconnaissance activities, our small units and groups kept a constant watch over the Japanese imperialists' operations and troop movements, while gathering a lot of valuable information useful for reference in the planning of our final offensive.

As the Japanese often made feints, our comrades had to repeat their reconnaissance frequently. In spite of every conceivable kind of trickery, the enemy could not deceive our scouts.

Yun Thae Hong, too, gathered accurate information about the make-up of the first directional army of the Kwantung Army, thus making a great contribution to the planning of operations against Japan by the Headquarters of the IAF.

We also paid great attention to infiltrating a great number of operatives into the enemy-held areas on a long-term basis. In those days many of our operatives worked in various important positions in enemy establishments, even in the Japanese army units, not to speak of the puppet Manchukuo army and police.

Underground workers were guided by an important principle that required them not to leave their work place at their own discretion unless recalled by those who had sent them. They were pledged not to divulge their secret work, at the cost of their lives.

Our comrades indeed lived up to this principle with their lives.

Let me take the case of Ji Kyong Su for example. Our Headquarters assigned him to the task of keeping himself entrenched in the enemy area for a long time, carrying out underground activities in the Soviet-Manchurian border area.

With his operational funds, Ji Kyong Su purchased land and a house, and also married. Pretending to be a landowner, he shrewdly got on intimate terms with Japanese soldiers and policemen, gleaning top-secret information from them and reporting it regularly to Headquarters. His information proved its worth in the operations for the final offensive for the liberation of the country.

Even after liberation, we did not recall him, because we judged that his work post would be the venue of the decisive battle with Jiang Jie-shi's army before long.

When his area was liberated, he gave up his land and house, and so escaped being attacked by the newly-liberated peasants.

Some time later, however, the area fell under the rule of the Kuomintang army. He took back his land from his tenants, and behaved as a landowner again, making friends with senior officers of the Kuomintang army and drawing valuable information from them.

However, when Northeast China was liberated from the rule of the Kuomintang army, Ji Kyong Su, who had performed distinguished services in silence, was branded as a reactionary and brought to trial. He was nearly

beaten to death by the peasants. Even while being flogged, he did not reveal his real identity.

He would have suffered greater mishaps if our comrades who were at his trial had not vouched for him as a soldier of the Anti-Japanese Guerrilla Army.

Hearing the news, I immediately recalled him to the homeland.

In Mijiang, Hunchun County, there is a place called Ssoksaegol, where an old man called Ryom was eking out a living by hunting. In those days the Japanese imperialists did not give permission to ordinary people to hunt unless they promised to help them with their intelligence work. Old man Ryom obtained a hunting license only after promising to do so. Im Chol's scouting party, which had been operating in the Tumen area, got this old man to play a double game by giving false information to the enemy, while giving authentic information to the guerrillas.

Im Chol's party succeeded in their reconnaissance of the Tumen area because they made effective use of this old man. Previously other parties dispatched to the Tumen area had all failed in their mission due to the counterintelligence of the enemy. Tumen was the base of the Japanese imperialist secret intelligence services, as well as of their army and police.

After liberation, the inhabitants of the area, regarding Ryom as a reactionary who had worked as an agent of the Japanese, confiscated all of his property. Like Ji Kyong Su, the old man seemed to have had a hard time of it at his trial. In early 1946, Im Chol vouched for his real identity. Afterwards, old man Ryom was held in respect as a patriot.

With the war against Japan impending, the military and political activities to make a breakthrough in the operations were stepped up.

With their defeat in the offing, the Japanese political and military circles came up with an assertion that they should "defend Korea to the last". They insisted that in the system of their self-support and self-protection Korea would be not only the supply base for their continental war, the last war base, but also a lifeline for keeping Japan alive to the last. Their "doctrine of the defence of Korea to the last" meant that they were prepared to fall back on

Korea to make a last-ditch effort to survive. To translate this doctrine into practice signified that Korea would be the ground of the final battle to annihilate the Japanese imperialists.

With this understanding, we channelled great efforts into ferreting out the enemy's important military secrets, by reinforcing the reconnaissance of the homeland.

Of these efforts, the scouting of the enemy's airfields was specially important.

Escalating their war, the Japanese imperialists had built or expanded many airfields in Korea and Manchuria. In our country they had built them in the east coast area; those in Chongjin and Kilju had been built in the course of their expansion of the war.

Surprisingly enough, at the new airfield in Kilju the planes had all nosedived each time they had taken off. Only after several test flights did the Japanese realize that there was an air pocket over the Kilju area. They soon closed it down. Owing to the construction of this airfield, many peasants had been driven from their land. Even this information was collected by our comrades who had been dispatched to the east coast area.

Those who had reconnoitred the Hoeryong airfield confirmed that only a few of the planes there were real, and the rest were all fake.

Kim Ja Rin's reconnaissance party, that had gone as far as Pyongyang by way of the east coast, climbed Moran Hill, from where they photographed the airfield.

The airfield had a repair shop for planes and lorries, and a number of attached buildings such as spare parts depot, transportation workshop, dispensary and canteen. The reconnaissance party photographed all of them, after entering the airfield disguised as Japanese gendarmes.

Kim Tae Hong who had been dispatched to northern Manchuria, also reconnoitred an airfield adroitly. Under the guise of a day labourer, he scouted an airfield on the Soviet-Manchurian border area for four months. The airfield had no more than 20 real planes; the rest were sham ones, I was told.

Our scouts went through many hardships. Some of them had to hide in a

ditch near a railway line for several days to reconnoitre the movements of military trains. Others had to ensconce themselves in holes in the ground all day long, sweating heavily on sweltering summer days, just to find out the state of the enemy's tactical training.

I still remember the activities of a scouting party the members of which all died heroically in the course of working several hundred kilometres away from the training base.

On the appointed days they used to report the results of reconnaissance to Headquarters by wireless. Their information was rich and accurate, and reported in time so that it greatly satisfied not only us but also the Soviet comrades.

One day, however, the party gave us an emergency call by radio, reporting that they had been surrounded by the enemy, their wireless equipment had been set up on a mountain top, and that they were sending their last message.

The message reported that the enemy had surrounded the mountain where the wireless equipment was and was closing in on them; a young soldier had gone out first to fight a do-or-die battle and fell; he had been followed by a veteran soldier, who also died. The operator herself, after sending the message, would explode a handful of grenades to kill at least one more enemy before dying.

After transmitting this message, the wireless operator, who hailed from southern Manchuria, died a heroic death.

Kim Hong Su also died a heroic death.

He went out towards Hunchun in 1943 on a reconnaissance mission but was arrested. The enemy put him to all kinds of severe torture to squeeze his secrets out of him, but to no avail.

Finally the enemy pushed him into a potato grinder, and ground him to death.

An article about his death was highlighted in the newspaper of the IAF.

I had loved this soldier dearly because he had always taken quiet care of any difficult job.

Ji Pong Son also fell in Hunchun in the spring of the same year while on a reconnaissance mission there.

There would be no end to it if I were to talk about all the reconnaissance activities of the small units and groups of the KPRA and their heroic struggles.

The successes we achieved in the period of reconnaissance activities in the enemy rear, making a breakthrough in the operations against Japan, would have been inconceivable apart from support from the people. We received great help from the people in those days.

From the outset of our preparations for the difficult scouting activities in the enemy area I had expected much help from the people, and emphatically told the members of the small units and groups over and over again that they should rely on the people and get their help without fail. In the meantime, I was somewhat worried that the new way of struggle in the form of reconnaissance in the enemy areas might not bring us into intimate and blood ties with the people and enable us to enjoy their understanding, sympathy and support as had been the case when we had been waging guerrilla warfare in large units, making us known widely in both Northeast China and the homeland.

But this arduous struggle of blazing a bloody trail in the operations against Japan gained us support and encouragement from the people at every step of the way, and vindicated our constant belief in and reliance on the people.

In this period we realized even more keenly that the people were fighting, believing in our KPRA and looking up to Mt. Paektu just as we believed in the people and relied on them.

As long as we believe in the people, and the people believe in us, and the entire nation supports us, we will surely emerge victorious–this truth, this conviction, inspired us with the greatest strength and courage, and gave us great strength for the decisive battle to annihilate the Japanese imperialists.

The hundreds and thousands of pieces of information we obtained through our reconnaissance work rendered us great help in the preparation for

the operations against Japan and for the final victory. But for such daring and wide-ranging reconnaissance activities of the KPRA, the operations against Japan to destroy the one-million-strong Kwantung Army would not have resulted in such a quick victory.

Precisely for this reason we take great pride and confidence in the fact that the KPRA made a breakthrough in the war against Japan at the cost of blood through the positive activities of its small units and groups and through their persistent and daring reconnaissance activities in the first half of the 1940s, thus playing the leading and decisive role in annihilating the Japanese imperialists.

# 4. The Spirit of the Nation

In the first half of the 1940s the Korean people were challenged to decide whether they could exist as a nation or not, and whether their downtrodden national character could revive or not. The Korean people faced oblivion unless they accepted Japanese surnames, bowed at Shinto shrines and abandoned their own language and spoke Japanese. That was the fate forced upon them by the Japanese.

In these tragic circumstances Korean patriots and progressive intellectuals fought stoutly to preserve the spirit of the nation, turning to Mt. Paektu, where the brilliant commander General Kim Il Sung was fighting against the Japanese.

Following is the great leader's recollection of their struggle.

With the start of the 1940s, the Japanese imperialists made frantic efforts to make Koreans their "imperial subjects". Their attempt to Japanize in a few decades the Korean nation with a history of 5,000 years clearly shows how villainous their colonial policy was.

The first song they taught primary schoolchildren was the song of the rising-sun flag. In this way, the Japanese imperialists forced "loyalty and patriotism" upon children from their primary school days. It was not without reason that a textbook for children contained a story about Nogi, a fanatic emperor-worshiper who demonstrated his "loyalty" by committing a suicide. To instil "loyalty and patriotism" in children they had to hold up such a ringleader of militarism as Nogi as an example of loyalty and filial piety. The "oath of imperial subjects" and the "exercise of imperial subjects", too, were imposed upon the Koreans to assimilate them as Japanese.

Being robbed of natural resources was, of course, as painful as losing a piece of flesh. Not satisfied with the plunder of our resources, the Japanese went so far as to take away brass bowls, spoons, chopsticks, candlesticks and

wine cups used for ancestral rites. In the end they even pulled out hairpins from women's hair.

There used to be a lot of big trees on Mt. Kumgang. But, after provoking the war against China, they cut down all the giant trees around the temples on Mt. Kumgang and took them away.

They plundered an enormous amount of other wealth, too much for us to calculate. So the Korean people were indignant.

What we resented more bitterly, however, was that the Japanese went through the catalogue of vices to obliterate the national character of Koreans. They forced Koreans to wear coloured clothes instead of their traditional white garments, change their family names, use the Japanese language, worship at Shinto shrines, pay silent tribute at noon and what not, just as they did.

What I detested most about the Japanese doings at that time was that they banned the Korean language and forced my compatriots to speak Japanese. A nation is characterized primarily by the community of blood and language. Without its language, the Korean nation could not exist.

Compelling Koreans to speak Japanese was nothing but an attempt to exterminate the Korean nation. A nation that has lost its language ceases to exist.

The Japanese imperialists touted the slogan, "The oneness of Japan and Korea must begin with everyday use of the Japanese language" and forced Koreans to speak Japanese at home, in church and even in bath houses, to say nothing of government offices, companies, schools and factories. The newspaper *Komin Nippo* was devoted exclusively to the dissemination of the Japanese language.

They were so frenzied about spreading the Japanese language that they coerced Korean writers to write in Japanese and published the magazine *National Literature* in Japanese.

In the closing days of Japanese rule, at least one act of a play had to be performed in Japanese. In my chat with Hwang Chol, Mun Ye Bong and Jo Ryong Chul after liberation, they said that Korean film stars had been forced

to practise Japanese pronunciation and that Korean singers had been compelled to sing at least one stanza of a Korean song in Japanese when recording their songs. In the end they launched a "people's singing campaign" and forced people to sing even fascist war songs in Japanese.

Students who did not speak Japanese were regarded as seditious. Government offices refused to deal with those who spoke Korean and crossed their names from the rationing list. Korean-speaking people were even denied train tickets.

"Kamidana" was a box in Japanese style which contained a tablet with the name Amaterasu Omikami, the purported founder of Japan, written on it. The Japanese imperialists forced every family to hang up such a box and trumpeted that "Japanese and Koreans are of the same descent." After liberation I learned that a person had served a prison term because he had defecated near a Shinto shrine.

When I was at the training base in the Far East of the Soviet Union, I was told that a farmer had changed his family name because the Japanese threatened him to expel his child from school if he refused to adopt a Japanese family name. He was so remorseful at having disgraced his ancestors that he drowned himself.

In such an oppressive world, even the alive are as good as dead.

It is not surprising that the aggressors who occupy other countries pursue a policy of assimilation in their colonies. Each assimilated its colonies in its own style–Turkey in Bulgaria, the United Kingdom in Ireland, Imperial Russia in Poland and France in Vietnam. But the Japanese imperialists were the only ones that deprived the people under their occupation of their language, spoken and written, and forced them to change their names.

What evil would they refrain from doing, these barbarians who did not hesitate to break into the royal palace in Seoul and murder Queen Min at the end of the last century? Koreans were in fact poised between life and death.

Korean intellectuals had no other choice but to resist the Japanese imperialist policy of national obliteration or obey their policy.

Most intellectuals, of course, chose resistance. But some of them shut

their eyes to the nation by escaping from reality, and others surrendered to the Japanese, hankering after honour and wealth. A few of them were even active in supporting and helping the Japanese imperialist policy of national assimilation.

When I was at the Far East training base, I frequently read publications from the homeland. So I knew well who were patriotic, who were selling out the nation, who entered officialdom and who went to prison, who were converted and who mounted the gallows.

Have any of you read Ri Kwang Su's article about the change of family names? I read this article in the newspaper *Maeil Sinbo*: "I am a subject of the Japanese Emperor. My children, too, will live as his subjects. I changed my name because I considered it more worthy of an Emperor's subject to have the Japanese name Kayama." This was the gist of his article. He named himself Kayama after the name of the place where Japanese Emperor Jinmu acceded to the throne.

Not a trace of the pride or honour of a Korean could be found in this article. This man was rotten to the core. When writing the *Theory of National Transformation* he took off his topcoat and jacket, but in this article he took off his trousers and underwear as well, and openly declared his pro-Japanese attitude.

He contributed to a magazine an article which praised the "volunteer" system.

After liberation Ri Kwang Su described his pro-Japanese activities as patriotic deeds for the "preservation of the nation". He said he had to have friendly relations with the Japanese to preserve the nation. But why did he praise the "volunteer" system if he had really wished the nation to survive? How many of the "volunteers" returned home alive from the battlefield?

Poet Han Ryong Un was a Buddhist. At the time of the March First Uprising, he was one of the 33 representatives of the nation. He was a Buddhist monk who insisted on action. He asserted that the independence of Korea would be possible only by the death-defying actions of the nation, not by a petition. When he was arrested by the enemy, he refused a lawyer, private food and bail. When most of

the representatives showed signs of vacillation, scared by the enemy's threats, he shouted throwing a bedpan: "Are you fighters for the country and the nation or not?"

The Japanese tried to bribe him with the offer of a piece of state land. But Han refused this, too. When his colleagues collected money to build him a house in Songbuk-dong, Seoul, he wanted to have it built with its back to the Governor-General's office, saying that he hated to see that building.

One day Han met Ri Kwang Su at the Jongno intersection. It was when Ri was going round to persuade Korean students to join the Japanese army. The two men had been on intimate terms before.

That day, however, Han passed Ri without even deigning to look at him. In embarrassment Ri turned and stopped him. He asked, "Don't you know me? I am Ri Kwang Su." Han replied, shaking his head, that the Ri Kwang Su he had known was dead. That was a death sentence the Buddhist monk pronounced upon Ri Kwang Su, who had lost the national spirit.

Choe Nam Son, too, changed from being a patriot to being pro-Japanese. He went so far as to say openly that Korea was destined to remodel herself on Japanese culture. Ri Kwang Su and Choe Nam Son regarded themselves as first-rate intellectuals, but their knowledge and literary talent, devoid of faith, were useless.

Choe Rin, too, yielded to the Japanese policy of assimilation.

Some literary men received prizes from the Government-General for writing pro-Japanese poems.

When these intellectuals were turning traitor, lamenting their misfortune of being Koreans, abandoning their ancestral names, wearing Japanese dress, bowing in the direction of the Japanese imperial palace and making a foolish pledge that they would die an honourable death for the emperor, patriotic scholars, educators, literary men, artists, journalists and other conscientious intellectuals fought stubbornly to uphold the honour of the Korean people, spitting at the traitors.

Ri Ki Yong was one of them.

He served prison terms twice, accused of involvement in the KAPF

(Korea Artista Proleta Federacio)[18] incident. A man like Rim Hwa turned traitor after being imprisoned, but Ri Ki Yong kept his principles as a patriotic writer after being released from jail.

Out of jail, he was jobless and was wandering about Seoul. At that time the Japanese imperialists promulgated the ordinance of probation for political offenders and arrested at random patriots and other progressive people on charges of harbouring dangerous ideas. The Japanese forced them to "serve the country". "Service to the country" meant conversion.

Ri Ki Yong was summoned by the police every three days. The enemy demanded that he should write works in Japanese and give pro-Japanese lectures in Japanese.

No coercion, however, could bring this man of unbreakable will to his knees. When the enemy tried to force their version of "national literature" upon him, he wrote stories in Korean in answer to their policy of making Koreans "imperial subjects". After he was blacklisted, he was reduced to dire poverty. He was so pressed for money that when his second son died, he wrote the short story *Money* by the corpse because he could not obtain funeral expenses.

Pestered by the police, Ri Ki Yong and his family took refuge on Mt. Kumgang. However, the enemy's spies shadowed him even there. Pro-Japanese elements threw stones at the door of his house and broke it several times.

However, he remained true to his principles as a patriotic intellectual. The people who were hiding in the mountains after evading military service or the labour draft came down to the village by night to ask his advice. Each time Ri encouraged them to stay in the mountains and resist the Japanese, even if it meant living on grass like cows or horses. The young people who were influenced by him in those days became cadres in that place after liberation, I was told.

Ri Kwang Su adopted a Japanese name, but Ri Ki Yong never changed his name. He did not allow even his relatives to have Japanese names, saying that if they changed their names they would become less than human.

When I first met him after liberation, I admired him, asking how such a weak person could overcome such severe trials in prison and continue to refuse to change his name.

"How can I, a literary man, abandon my principles when Ryu Kwan Sun, a girl of only 17, kept her integrity, sacrificing her life in her prime?" he replied. "When the great Kanto earthquake happened, I saw the Japanese in Tokyo slaughtering Koreans mercilessly with bamboo spears, swords and hooks. I thought at that time that I had to have a showdown with the enemy even at the cost of my life."

Sin Chae Ho was one of the patriots who fought resolutely against the Japanese policy of assimilation.

He was a distinguished historian as well as a famous writer and political essayist. He had great literary talent. When I was in Jilin, I read his letter of protest which the Rev. Son Jong Do had kept. His letter criticized Syngman Rhee, who wanted to put Korea under the mandate of the United States. It was so powerful and incisive that I read it over and over again. The Rev. Son said that he had kept it because he was impressed by it.

While publishing different newspapers and magazines in Shanghai and Beijing, Sin Chae Ho wrote many articles which criticized compromisers. When an article of his was carried in a newspaper, people would rush to buy it. Reading his articles one feels as if one is seeing a throbbing organism. Every sentence of his articles vibrated with the spirit of Koreans.

Towards the end of the 1920s Sin was arrested by the Japanese imperialists and put behind bars in Lushun. While in prison for about ten years, he never yielded to the Japanese.

Even in prison he continued to write articles imbued with the spirit of our nation.

The fact that in Lushun Prison he continued to write *The Ancient History of Korea* and *The History of Ancient Korean Culture* shows how great were the efforts he made to preserve the orthodox quality and soul of our nation.

Sin Chae Ho died in a lonely cell in an alien land after continuing his writing by mustering up the last drop of his blood.

Feeling the indomitable spirit of resistance of the patriots and intellectuals who, even on the brink of death in prison, were trying to preserve the soul of our nation and awaken the national spirit of the people, I made a firm determination to defend their spirit and unite the soul of each of them into a major wing of the force of national resistance.

Preserving the spirit of our nation and preparing national resistance were inseparably related to each other. Preserving the spirit of the nation was the spiritual base and a major link in the preparation for national resistance. Without the struggle to preserve the national spirit, it would have been impossible to enlist the broad patriotic forces in the ranks of national resistance.

Attaching importance to the mission of the intellectuals to preserve the history, culture and traditions of the nation, we continued to dispatch political operatives among intellectuals both at home and abroad.

I would emphasize to the political operatives who were leaving for the homeland: As a mother gives birth to a child, so everybody is born and dies in the embrace of the nation, and even after death cannot be separated from the nation. We are linked with one another by the same blood ties in the community of our nation. So everyone must take part in the struggle to defend it. Both the revolution and the armed struggle are carried out for the nation. What we are determined to take back is not only our territory, but also our history, culture and the nation itself. Therefore, you must make full preparations for national resistance by combining the arming of all the people closely with the struggle to defend the national spirit, and expand the ARF organizations among the broad masses of intellectuals such as scholars, educators, journalists, literary men and artists, to make each of them a spark and bullet in the struggle to defend the spirit of the nation.

At the end of 1938 the *Tong-A Ilbo* reported the arrest of the members of a secret society called the Red Research Society in the Yonhui College in Seoul. Paek Nam Un, who was the first Minister of Education of our Republic had belonged to this society.

In the awful years when those yielding to the enemy were treated as

"human beings" and those resisting the enemy were persecuted as "beasts", he chose the road of resistance to defend and preserve the national spirit.

Paek Nam Un worked his way through a commercial college in Japan and became a teacher at Yonhui College.

*The Socio-Economic History of Korea* was a typical masterpiece written by him. While teaching at the college he applied himself to writing. It was an admirable patriotic deed that he wrote this work when the Japanese imperialists were making frantic attempts to destroy our national economy and erase even the name of the Korean nation.

There was an economic research society, a legal organization, in Yonhui College. Paek Nam Un played a leading role in developing this society into a fiercely revolutionary organization.

With some fellow professors he converted the economic research society, a simple scientific research body, into the Red Research Society that aspired to communism.

Since the society got in touch with the political operatives dispatched by us, all its activities were geared to realizing the Ten-Point Programme of the ARF. During vacations all the members of this society went out among the people to launch enlightenment campaigns.

According to an official paper, *Recent Public Security in Korea* published by the police bureau of the Government-General, the Red Research Society was engaged in organizing seminars, short-courses and reading circles to instill communism in the members.

I was told that Paek Nam Un translated *The True Record of the Ri Dynasty*, living in retirement and jobless until the defeat of Japan. The fact that he wrote *The Socio-Economic History of Korea*, developed the economic research society into the Red Research Society, and resolved to translate *The True Record of the Ri Dynasty* was a challenge to the Japanese imperialist policy of making Koreans "imperial subjects".

Since the year when he heard the news of the Battle of Pochonbo, he lived in a cold room without heating even in winter, I was told. Why? Hearing that Kim Il Sung and all the guerrillas under him were eating and sleeping in the

open, covering themselves with fallen leaves in all seasons, he felt deeply ashamed of living in a heated room.

When we were organizing the Cabinet, he was the first to be appointed Minister of Education. He also served at various times as President of the Academy of Sciences and Vice-Chairman of the Standing Committee of the Supreme People's Assembly. He worked very conscientiously.

Kye Ung Sang, a world-famous geneticist whom our people produced, was a man with an exceptionally strong sense of national pride and firm scientific convictions.

He studied very hard from childhood. He was too poor to buy paper, so he wrote on dried leaves. If he obtained a pair of socks once in a while, he kept them in his pocket as much as possible, putting them on only when he was visiting neighbours. He often walked barefoot, so as not to wear out his shoes.

Because he studied very hard, saving every single penny, he graduated from a university in Japan and went through a post-graduate course.

When he finished his post-graduate course, many institutes in Japan invited him to work there. His tutor at the university, too, wanted him to work with him in an agricultural experimental station to be established in Manchuria.

However, Kye Ung Sang declined all their offers. His wish was to continue his research into silkworms in a place where there were no Japanese army. He had a strong desire to return home for scientific study, but gave up the idea.

He thought over his future and at last made up his mind to go to China. At that time there were no Japanese in South China. The Japanese began to invade China proper following the July 7 incident.

Only when the Japanese occupied Guangdong did he think of returning to his motherland. He resolved to go back to the land of his forefathers now that the Japanese had appeared everywhere. When he was coming back from South China he brought with him a new variety of silkworms he had invented, going through great hardships.

After liberation he was disgusted at the activities of the American military government and came to Pyongyang with silkworm eggs in his trunk. When I met him first, he said that a man with the soul of a Korean could never live under the US military government. His words convinced me further that he was a scholar with a strong sense of national pride.

In the northern half of Korea he invented many new varieties of silkworm eggs, which were highly productive and capable of resisting diseases.

Only men of firm faith can preserve their national spirit.

If they are to make real contributions to their country and fellow people, intellectuals must have ardent patriotism and unshakable scientific convictions.

The Korean Language Association was one of the organizations which launched a relentless struggle to preserve the national spirit in the homeland in the closing years of Japanese rule.

According to Ri Kuk Ro, this association was established in the early 1930s. The Korean Language Study Association was its predecessor.

The Korean Language Association quietly did a lot of useful work. It was not until this association was organized that the compilation of a proper Korean dictionary got under way. Previously there was no Korean dictionary worth mentioning in our country.

Of course, many scholars tried to compile one, but doing so in a ruined country was no easy job.

However, the Korean Language Association undertook this heavy task of its own accord.

Without language there can be no development of culture. The development of culture is impossible without the reasonable arrangement and standardization of language and letters, the basis of its development. The most powerful means of arranging and standardizing language and letters in a rational manner is a dictionary that integrates and systematizes the resources of the national language.

Compilation of the national language dictionary was an enormous task, which required boundless efforts. Particularly difficult for the association was

a lack of money. Because they worked in secret, avoiding the eyes of the Japanese, they could not obtain support from the people. What an arduous undertaking it must have been to edit a large dictionary when there was not even a standard of correct spelling!

They made two copies of the manuscript of the dictionary and hid them in different places. What heroic patriots they were, these scholars who compiled the dictionary by picking up one by one the downtrodden, yet precious Korean words many decades after the ruin of the country, at a time when people who did not speak Japanese were scorned like the dumb!

The Korean Language Association also engaged in external activities in secret. Its representatives took part in the International Phonetics Conference held in the United Kingdom in 1935 and in the World Linguistics Conference held in Denmark the following year and denounced the Japanese imperialists, exposing how they were trying to obliterate the Korean language.

King Sejong organized a body of scholars to devise an alphabet with which to write the Korean language, brushing aside the desperate objections of sycophants like Choe Man Ri, who wanted the people to remain ignorant. He supervised the composition of the epic poem *Songs of the Dragons* in the new alphabet, and ordered that all official documents as well as Confucian and Buddhist scriptures be written in it too. Previously all writing had been in Chinese.

Under the reign of King Yonsan (1494-1506) the Korean Script Institute was abolished, and the Korean alphabet began to be forsaken. But it was revived by the Political Reform of 1894.

The Korean alphabet, which began to see the light again at the end of the last century, was soon trampled upon again, this time by the Japanese, who pursued the policy of “daily use of the Japanese language”. The organization which rose against this policy was the Korean Language Association.

But this association, which had fought for the independence of the country and the arrangement and dissemination of the Korean language, was suppressed by the enemy in the autumn of 1942.

Dozens of scholars of this association and other people involved in its activities were arrested by the Japanese police.

When I heard this news from the comrades of a small unit who had been to the homeland, I could not repress my indignation.

At that time the whole camp was excited at the news that the Soviet army had annihilated hundreds of thousands of German troops at Stalingrad, but I lost my appetite at the news that many of our scholars had been arrested and tortured.

The scholars underwent a terrible time in Hamhung Prison. The enemy's torture was so cruel that some of them died even before they were brought to trial.

The Japanese police regarded the Korean Language Association as an anti-Japanese independence body, but they failed to discover that this association was under our influence, because the imprisoned scholars kept the secret, shedding their blood and sacrificing their lives.

In the association there was an underground organization which included Ri Kuk Ro and other advanced people who were linked directly to our organization. I was told that Choe Il Chon called on Ri Kuk Ro in Seoul in the autumn of 1936 and in the summer of 1937. He had been dispatched to the homeland on a mission to build an ARF organization among intellectuals there.

Choe Il Chon carried out his mission with credit, frequenting Seoul as the head of the Changchun (Manchukuo) bureau of the *Tong-A Ilbo*.

Ri Kuk Ro was terribly tortured in the prison, because he took the "guilt" upon himself by stating that he had done everything his comrades were accused of.

After returning to Seoul, instead of taking care of his terribly wounded body, he did a lot of work for the unity of democratic forces and the building of an independent sovereign state using the Korean Language Association as a base.

When Ri Kuk Ro came to Pyongyang to take part in the April North-South Joint Conference, I told him: "We paid deep attention to the incident involving your association. When we heard that the Japanese police tortured its members every day and some people died on the rack, we were

very worried. But the association members never yielded even in prison. We admired your steadfast anti-Japanese spirit and collective patriotism."

Ri Kuk Ro replied, "Don't mention it. We could hold on so stubbornly because we had something to believe in. What gave us the courage? It was none other than Mt. Paektu." He went on to say that after the Battle of Pochonbo he and the other members of the society bought a bottle of liquor and drank together in tears.

Because Ri was a man to be held up as an example in the struggle to preserve the national spirit, a patriot who enjoyed respect from both communists and nationalists, we invited him to the platform of the April North-South Joint Conference and let him read the document, "Appeal to the Entire Korean People" on behalf of the conference.

After the conference he said that he would stay in Pyongyang to work with me. So I had all his family brought to Pyongyang from Seoul. For several years he worked as a Minister in the Cabinet. He was so modest and well-mannered that he never used the low forms of speech even to his juniors.

Once I read his personal history, and it surprised me. He had been to many places and met many people. He had been to China, Japan, the Soviet Union, Germany, France, the United Kingdom and the United States. He had even met Lenin.

He met Lenin when the Conference of Peoples of the Far East was being held in Moscow. Ri Kuk Ro went to Moscow from Shanghai and stayed together with Ri Tong Hui and Pak Jin Sun. He met Lenin twice in the Kremlin.

He had also met most of renowned Korean nationalist champions. He knew Choe Il Chon, Pyon Tae U, Hwang Paek Ha and many others who were active in Northeast China.

Wilhelm Pieck invited Ri to study in Germany when he was staying in Moscow. Ri entered Berlin University at his recommendation, and obtained a PhD.

One day I asked him why a doctor of philosophy had specialized in the Korean language and how he became a linguist, when some people advised

him to enter the business world after he returned home and others urged him to choose a political career and distinguish himself.

Ri Kuk Ro replied: "On a visit to Ireland I heard the people using English as the official language instead of their mother tongue; the signboards, milestones and all other writing was in English. Seeing these things I was afraid that the Korean language, too, might suffer such a fate. So I decided to devote my whole life to the movement to defend our mother tongue when I returned home."

The incident of the association shocked us. We saw our living, fighting motherland in the intellectuals who were defending the national spirit at the cost of their blood in defiance of the enemy's weapons and gallows.

The students of Kyongsong Imperial University also formed an organization and launched an active struggle to preserve the spirit of the nation.

The patriotic intellectuals of this organization rose against the Japanese policy of obliterating the Korean nation and fought resolutely to defend the national character.

They attacked the absurd assertion of the pro-Japanese literary men and government-patronized scholars while disseminating the excellent traits of the Korean nation by lawful means.

They said, "The Korean nation is neither indolent nor fond of factional strife; Korean people are not well-off because of the Japanese, not because they are idle. The Japanese deprived our nation of all its wealth. Who dares say our nation is a backward nation? The Korean nation is an excellent nation that can take pride in its resourcefulness and civilization in the eyes of the world. No matter how harshly the Japanese may suppress us, the Korean nation will preserve its spirit at any cost."

But the intellectuals learned the lesson that speech alone could not counter the enemy's violence. So they built bases on mountains and made preparations to organize armed ranks with the workers of coal and other mines, and evaders of military service and the labour draft hiding in the mountains.

A large number of young people, students, scholars, religious men, educators, literary men, artists and journalists joined organizations for national resistance and fought resolutely against the Japanese imperialist policy of obliterating the nation. Intellectuals who were not involved in such organizations, too, confidently rose against the enemy's policy of assimilating the nation. The tyrannical repression and iron chains could not break the struggle of awakened intellectuals to defend the national spirit.

Successful intellectuals who are remembered in history were all loyal to their countries and nations, and strong in their faith and will. That is why I always emphasize that intellectuals must love their country and nation ardently, and cherish an indomitable will and revolutionary faith in any adversity.

# 5. For Unity with the Anti-Japanese Patriotic Forces

Liberating the country by means of unity of the entire nation, particularly by rallying all the anti-Japanese patriotic forces, was the strategic line that the great leader Comrade Kim Il Sung consistently maintained in the whole course of the anti-Japanese revolution.

Ever since the beginning of the mighty struggle against the Japanese, the great leader devoted all his efforts to the unity of all the anti-Japanese patriotic forces at home and abroad.

Here is what he said about his efforts to this end in the first half of the 1940s.

I have maintained all my life the important principle of uniting with the patriotic progressive nationalists, and exerted great efforts to put it into practice.

At one time the nationalist movement, together with the communist movement, was one of the two components of the national liberation struggle in our country. The national liberation struggle of Korea started with the nationalist movement. In the first half of the 1940s, nationalism still existed as an ideological trend and as an anti-Japanese patriotic force, though it was weak. Under the banner of anti-Japanese struggle, the majority of nationalists, except for the reformist wing, continued resistance against the Japanese imperialists at home and abroad. The nationalist movement did have some influence on our compatriots in the homeland and overseas.

In spite of our failure to cooperate with Ryang Se Bong, we did not hesitate to make tireless efforts to build a united front with the anti-Japanese nationalist campaigners.

The anti-Japanese nationalists, too, tried in every possible way to cooperate with us. Those who had utterly rejected or shunned communists in former days began to turn to us.

The moves of the anti-Japanese independence fighters to ally with us became a general trend in the latter half of the 1930s. After the formation of the ARF in May 1936, we developed the united front movement, passionately appealing to the entire nation to fight for national liberation. The nationalists made a positive response to this appeal.

This was illustrated by the facts that Yun Il Pha, chief of staff of an Independence Army unit in southern Manchuria, sent us a letter of support, that a Mr. Pak, an independence fighter among the Korean residents in Shanghai, came to southern Manchuria to visit Ri Tong Gwang, the ARF representative in that area, and that the remnants of the Independence Army, which had been under the command of Kim Hwal Sok, came over, led by Choe Yun Gu, to the KPRA.

What made the nationalist camp abandon their chauvinistic attitude and attach great importance to cooperation with us?

It was because the KPRA had built up a high reputation and increased its influence. The anti-Japanese armed struggle became the principal factor in the Korean national liberation movement, and the KPRA was the main force in that front. It represented the nation's aspiration for independence and its faith in the cause and it was organizing and leading the revolution against the Japanese.

Various forces were fighting to liberate the country from Japanese occupation, but it was the KPRA that was dealing the heaviest blows to the enemy. It was the KPRA that struck the greatest terror into the Japanese imperialists; it was also the KPRA that inspired the Korean people with the greatest hope.

The Korean people believed that the KPRA was the only real armed force capable of driving the Japanese imperialists from their country.

According to his assistants, Kim Ku shouted for joy at the news that Japanese imperialists had been destroyed at the Battle of Pochonbo.

The organ of the Korean National Revolutionary Party published in Nanjing also gave a detailed account of this battle under the title *Happy News about the Korean Revolutionary Armed Movement*. Its editorial staff sent that

article to the Hamhung branch of the *Joson Ilbo*, I was told. This was an expression of pan-national support, encouragement and solidarity that transcended political ideas and doctrines. The Korean independence campaigners in China proper, too, were apparently excited at the news of the battle.

Kim Ku tried to find a way for armed resistance from his early days. The Worker-Soldier Society organized by him in the early 1920s, in fact, aimed at armed resistance. He hated those people who were trying to gain the independence of Korea by cultivating personal ability without resistance or in a diplomatic way.

He regretted his failure to raise a big army and launch a powerful armed struggle. So he took great interest in our armed struggle and expected a great deal from it.

Immediately after liberation, *The Independence of Korea*, a newspaper for overseas Koreans published in Los Angeles, carried an article which criticized Kim Ku. The gist was that Koreans in the United States had raised a large sum of money for Kim Il Sung's army and the Korean Volunteers in response to an appeal by Kim Ku, but Kim Ku himself had frittered it all away.

His failure to send war funds was understandable, however. To deliver the money he would have had to contact our organization, but that must have been difficult to do.

By the fact that Kim Ku appealed for donations of money for us, I knew that he tried in every possible way to support our armed struggle.

The Battle of Jiansanfeng, too, had a great impact on those in China proper who were fighting for independence.

Rapidly growing interest among the nationalist organizations abroad in our struggle and their rapid turn towards alliance with communism also resulted from the fact that we had founded the ARF and published its ten-point programme, the common fighting programme of the nation which was acceptable to all the people.

In those days the anti-Japanese patriotic forces in China proper were

divided because of differences in their political ideas and doctrines, and in their fighting methods. They were divided mainly into two groups; one was Kim Ku's nationalist faction and the other Kim Won Bong's leftist faction called the people's front which was close to communism.

The two factions were independently connected with Jiang Jie-shi's Kuomintang, the military commission of China's Nationalist Government and the CPC.

Two problems had to be settled to realize a united front with the independence fighters in China proper. To begin with, the anti-Japanese nationalist organizations had to be rallied into one. In other words, organizations with different ideas, doctrines and fighting methods had to be amalgamated into a single front under the banner of anti-Japanese patriotism, regardless of their differences. The next step was to effect cooperation on a new basis between us and all these patriotic forces.

From the time of the founding of the ARF, we made consistent and sincere efforts to find a solution to the problem. After the outbreak of the Sino-Japanese War, we worked even harder to effect cooperation with the movement in China proper.

With the outbreak of the Sino-Japanese War, the second Kuomintang-Communist Cooperation was realized in the Chinese revolution, attracting great attention worldwide. This ushered in a new phase in the national-salvation resistance of the Chinese people and gave a strong impetus to the development of the Chinese revolution.

In this political context, Kim Ku's faction and Kim Won Bong's faction succeeded in forming a single front, and published a joint declaration in September 1940, putting an end to their past confrontation. Their joint declaration contained many items similar to those of the Inaugural Declaration and Ten-Point Programme of the ARF. Afterwards, the provisional government drew Kim Won Bong's faction into left-right collaboration.

This change in the strategy of the nationalist movement attracted our attention.

Also in the first half of the 1940s, we tried hard through different channels to win over the anti-Japanese patriotic forces in Manchuria and China proper, as well as those in the homeland and Japan.

As the Pacific War and the Sino-Japanese War raged, Japan sank deeper into a morass. One event after another heralded its defeat.

The rapidly changing situation demanded that all the anti-Japanese forces at home and abroad should unite and prepare for the last decisive battle against the Japanese imperialists. Decades of anti-Japanese struggle had made the people understand that the most effective way to liberate the country was to form a strong union of national forces irrespective of their ideas and party affiliation.

Uniting the broad sections of the patriotic forces at home and abroad and building up the impetus of national resistance was our historic task as well as the common desire of patriots of different classes and the masses of the people.

The following is taken from Japanese police records about the fighting methods of the Koreans battling for independence and the change in the popular sentiment in the 1940s:

"The scheming of the Koreans, both nationalist and communist, at home and abroad, is aimed at the independence of Korea. They declare that their objective is the independence of Korea. Those under the wing of the Chongqing provisional government, those under the influence of the United States … and those connected with the Soviet Union and the CPC, all pursue the independence of Korea as their final objective." (Report by the head of the police bureau of the Korean Government-General to the heads of police departments of all provinces, May Showa 19 (1944).)

"Special aspects of ideological offences:

"They are focusing on the independence of Korea, their central objective, not constrained by particular ideas or doctrines, and establishing a closer relationship with the communist movement, towards which they were formerly antagonistic. The incidents of joint scheming by nationalist elements and leftist elements are not rare at present." *(Monthly Bulletin of External Affairs of the Political Police,* No. 51, p. 5, Public Security Section, Police Bureau, the Korean Government-General, March and April Showa 19 (1944).)

The Provisional Government in Shanghai was one of the organizations to which we paid attention to establish relations with the anti-Japanese patriotic forces in China proper.

After the Japanese invaded China proper, the provisional government frequently moved from place to place. Because it moved here and there, following the Kuomintang government, it was barely able to maintain its name. The people connected with the provisional government recollected that they drifted from place to place with no time to unpack. Sometimes they just sat in hotel rooms without having even time to unpack their luggage before moving elsewhere to escape the ravages of war.

In the turmoil of ceaseless factional strife, amendments to its constitution and reorganization of its Cabinet, the provisional government was constantly haunted by the danger of insolvency and assassination.

They were in such dire straits at that time that Kim Ku said in recollection: "Because of economic difficulties we could hardly maintain the name of the government. The rent of the office building was only 30 *yuan* and the salary for an office boy was less than 20 *yuan*, but we had no means to pay our way. The owner of the building dunned us for payment many times. I slept on the wooden floor of the government building and survived only on handouts from compatriots who had jobs. I was the most wretched of beggars."

In 1940 the provisional government settled in Chongqing, where Jiang Jie-shi had set up the headquarters of the Chinese government. From that time on, they were able to lead a comparatively settled life, and organized the Liberation Army. This meant a step forward in their activities.

In those days some people who worked for the Liberation Army carried in their publication accounts of the struggle of the KPRA and the activities of the NAJAA mentioning the names of Kim Il Sung, Yang Jing-yu and Zhao Shang-zhi.

Their army, however, had little experience and was weak in terms of

equipment. The members of the provisional government themselves considered that the development of their armed force was limited. Analyzing the circumstances of the overseas anti-Japanese forces among the Koreans, Ri Chong Chon frankly admitted that it was difficult for the provisional government to assume leadership, and that it was not prepared to greet liberation on August 15, 1945.

Following is a report by the Japanese police about the Liberation Army.

"The battle array of the Liberation Army is very poor, contrary to the exaggerated propaganda of the provisional government. No detachment has more than ten soldiers, except for the fifth detachment, which has 50 men. But 20 of them are anarchists under the direct command of Ra Wol Han, and the rest are Koreans taken prisoner from the Japanese army. Most of them are nearly illiterate and former drug smugglers. The army is so weak that it does nothing notable." (Political police section, police department of Hwanghae Province, February Showa 18 (1943).)

However, we tried to join hands with them. We considered that if we achieved cooperation with Kim Ku's faction, their force too would be mobilized for the final push to liberate the country.

At first Kim Chaek was not very keen on my proposal to cooperate with Kim Ku, an anti-communist element, and did not expect much from the venture even if it was realized. Hearing my explanation, however, he supported me, saying that he saw only Kim Ku's anti-communist tendency and not his patriotism. He also proposed to get in touch with the anti-Japanese forces in China proper through Ho Jong Suk.

Choe Yong Gon was also reticent about cooperation with Kim Ku. He was more sceptical than Kim Chaek in his attitude towards the provisional government. "We should not join hands with those who are enmeshed in factional strife," he said. "It will do us no good. We should rather cooperate with Kim Won Bong's faction." Of course, Choe Yong Gon too finally came round to my way of thinking.

Kim Won Bong formed the Justice Group, and engaged in assassinations,

raids and sabotage in China proper, Northeast China and in the homeland.

Afterwards he organized the Korean Volunteers Corps. The commander of its first company, of about 40 men, was Pak Hyo Sam, who acted as the commandant of the Central Security Officers School for a short period after liberation.

Later Kim Won Bong told me that the Korean Volunteers Corps was so weak in strength and equipment that it could not take independent actions, but went round among Chinese units launching anti-war propaganda and operations to demoralize the enemy forces using loudspeakers.

However, we attached importance to their resolve to defeat the Japanese imperialists by force of arms, in spite of the fact that they were a puny force.

We directed considerable attention to the continued existence of the Korean Independence Union and the Korean Volunteers in North China.

In those days Mu Jong played a great role in North China. He was renowned for his contribution to the building of the Chinese Red Army and the liberation struggle of the Chinese people as well.

After returning home he worked as Vice-Minister of National Defence and as an artillery commander. At that time I offered him a house near mine.

He rendered distinguished service in army building in the liberated homeland, but he was criticized for severe bureaucratic actions during the Fatherland Liberation War and was dismissed from military service.

Though he had been relieved of his post, we did our best to cure him when he fell seriously ill. In Changchun, China, there was a hospital run by a Romanian medical team. Mu Jong received treatment in that hospital. He wanted to breathe his last by our side, so we brought him home. When he died I had a decent funeral held for him, highly appreciating his distinguished services.

When I met Mu Jong for the first time, he said, “I have heard a lot about you, General Kim, and the news has encouraged me. Whenever I thought that in Korea there was a general who was striking terror into the Japanese I was delighted. I was in the 8th Route Army in body, but my mind was always on Mt. Paektu. I tried in every possible way to join

hands with you, General Kim, seeking a way for the Korean Volunteers to join forces with your army, the KPRA, hoping to destroy the Japanese imperialists through joint operations by these two forces."

A Japanese government document concerning the activities of the North China detachment of the Korean Volunteers to establish relations with General Kim Il Sung reads as follows:

"The movements of the North China detachment of the Korean Volunteers:

"In about May or June 1941 a new detachment of the Korean Volunteers was formed in North China.

"While recruiting men and making fallacious propaganda in the Beijing-Hankou line area, where we are in occupation, it is trying to cooperate with Kim Il Sung, a Korean rebel in Manchuria, and to have relations with comrades in Korea. ... It has made a declaration as follows: 'We will continue the anti-Japanese struggle to liberate Korea by consolidating the unity of our unit, rallying the 200,000 compatriots in North China and cooperating with revolutionaries and revolutionary organizations and armed ranks in Northeast China and Korea.' " (Political police section, police department of Hwanghae Province, February Showa 18 (1943).)

Ho Jong Suk, who served as the first Minister of Culture and Information after liberation, was in Yanan in the 1940s. She said that there were many renowned champions among the Korean fighters in Yanan, and they all yearned to join our army. She, too, was so attracted by our army that she asked Zhou En-lai and Zhu De to allow her to go to Manchuria, but was criticized by her Chinese comrades for harbouring nationalism.

From what she said I knew that when we were trying to get in touch with the Korean fighters and patriotic figures in China proper, they also earnestly wished to cooperate with us.

At that time they participated in many of the operations of the 8$^{th}$ Route Army to demoralize the enemy, and their main target was the young Koreans serving in the Japanese army.

They called to those young men through loudspeakers, saying that they should not serve as cannon-fodder for the Japanese, but come over to the Korean Volunteers or the 8$^{th}$ Route Army–those in central and southern

China to the Korean Volunteers Corps or the New 4th Army and those in Manchuria to Kim Il Sung's army.

They also issued rules about the treatment to be given to the Korean soldiers who came over to their side. They stimulated desertion by promising that those coming over with heavy machine-guns would receive a certain sum of money and special supplies of daily necessities for three years, those with light machine-guns, grenade-launchers or rifles would get a certain sum of money each and those who surrendered unarmed would receive education or medical treatment in accordance with their needs. The demoralization operations produced great results.

There were communists and nationalists among the Korean patriots who were active in the mainland of China. All of them aspired after solidarity and cooperation with us, irrespective of their ideas and doctrines. It was a laudable thing in many ways.

We never discriminated against people with different ideas and doctrines. We did not care whether they were under the influence of the CPC or under the wing of Jiang Jie-shi, and considered everyone who loved the country as the object of our cooperation.

We were able to use different channels to establish relations with the people in China's mainland–the channels of the Soviet military authorities or the Comintern, as well as messengers from the NAJAA to China proper. Sometimes we directly sent our messengers to the necessary targets.

Among the channels we used to get in touch with people in China proper when we were waging the armed struggle in Northeast China there was a liaison channel of the 7th Corps of the NAJAA in the Raohe and Tongjiang areas. In addition, the international channels to Yili in Xinjiang Province, Lanzhou in Gansu Province and Yanan in Shaanxi Province were available to us. Another was the guerrilla channel from Dongbiandao, Manchuria, to the Manchurian-Chinese border.

At the training base in the Far East region were staying Liu Ya-lou and Lu Dong-sheng, who had served in the Chinese Red Army as division commanders and were giving lectures to the IAF before receiving military

training in the Soviet Union, as well as Wang Peng, the CPC liaison officer. I intended to send letters with them to the Koreans in Yanan and Chongqing when they returned to China proper, but they did not return to Yanan until the day the Japanese imperialists were defeated.

Lu Ya-lou was the chief of staff of the Northeast Field Army during the operations to liberate Northeast China. Later, he became the Commander of the Air Force of the Chinese People's Liberation Army.

Lu Dong-sheng, too, remained in Northeast China as the commander of the Songjiang Military District. Apparently he had another name, Song Ming. He fell in action at the end of 1945.

We tried to contact the people in China proper through the small units sent to Northeast China, as well as through the underground organization channels in the homeland.

As advised by Kim Chaek, I expected much from Ho Jong Suk. If our contacts reached Ho Jong Suk we could open a way through her to join hands easily with the anti-Japanese forces around Yanan and Chongqing.

We paid special attention to her, partly because the record of her patriotic struggle was admirable and partly because she was the daughter of Ho Hon, who was closely connected with Kim Chaek.

We sent an instruction to an underground organization in Sinuiju which had once been under the leadership of Kang Pyong Son, a DIU member, to establish relations with the patriots in China proper. In accordance with this instruction, the underground organization in Sinuiju gave its agent in Tianjin an assignment to open a KPRA liaison channel to Yanan and Chongqing.

That agent tried hard to build a liaison office for our cooperation with Yanan and Chongqing, I was told.

The Japanese police collected various items of information concerning the fact that when he was fighting in the IAF the great leader tried in every possible way to achieve a national united front with the anti-Japanese patriotic forces in China proper and an anti-imperialist joint front with the Chinese anti-Japanese forces, including the CPC:

"Activities of Kim Il Sung:

"Working in the Okeyanskaya training camp near Vladivostok in the Soviet Far East region, he is bent on recruiting and leading Korean rebels in Manchuria. According to recently acquired information, he is now making preparations to dispatch agents to Manchuria in secret to disrupt military transportation by destroying railways in Manchuria and Korea, and to instigate popular unrest, in concert with air raids on Manchuria and Korea to be made by the American air force in China, in accordance with a secret agreement between the United States and the Soviet Union.

"After visiting Moscow twice in mid-June he went to Chongqing and Yanan to discuss many matters with the Soviet and American embassies in China and the CPC organs, and to plan his future activities. He reorganized railway destruction teams and ideological operation teams with the Korean and Manchurian rebels who had been active along the Amnok River. These secret agents are now undergoing training around Khabarovsk in the Soviet Union." *(Monthly Report by the Special Political Police*, p. 76, Public Security Section, Security Police Bureau, Ministry of the Interior, November Showa 19 (1944).)

When we were seeking to establish relations with the patriotic anti-Japanese forces in China proper, these forces in Chongqing, too, were trying in every way to collaborate with us.

According to An U Saeng, secretary to Kim Ku and nephew of An Jung Gun, Kim Ku also dispatched a messenger to us. However, the country was liberated when he was still on his way to Manchuria.

I was told that a Mr. Kim had come as far as Mudanjiang in the capacity of the representative of the provisional government, but had returned to Chongqing, unable to meet us.

A Japanese source acknowledged that we were in touch with the group of Koreans in China proper who belonged to the CPC, centred on Junggangjin, Linjiang, Hyesanjin and Tonghua.

In the days of the IAF we were also interested in contacting religious circles, while carrying out small-unit actions.

Towards the end of 1942, Yun Se Bok, the third-generation leader of the headquarters of the Taejong sect, and many other religious people were arrested by the police.

These religious people launched anti-Japanese activities, declaring that

the mission of Taejong sect was to pray for the freedom of the Korean nation from the fetters of Japan and Manchukuo, and reconstruct their country. One of its leaders openly declared that the defeat of Japan in the great East Asian war was inevitable, so the followers of the sect should take the opportunity to hasten the day of national liberation. He also said that, whereas there was Ba Maw in Burma there was Kim Il Sung in Korea, and that the happiness of the Korean nation would be achieved by its independence.

Having heard from a small unit that had returned from a mission that the Mudanjiang police were rounding up Taejong activists, I gave instructions to the Anti-Japanese Association under the influence of the 2nd Directional Army whose headquarters was situated in Ningan County, instructions to frustrate the enemy suppression, take measures to defend patriotic religious people and step up the work of uniting the patriotic forces in Huadian, Dunhua and Antu behind the organization.

The anti-Japanese nationalist organization in the homeland to which we paid attention when we were preparing the final battle against the Japanese was the Korean Nation-Building Union, organized by Ryo Un Hyong. This union was an underground organization formed in 1944. It had an affiliated organization, the Peasants Union, which had been formed mainly with the farmers around Yangphyong, Kyonggi Province, Ryo's native place.

In that year the Japanese repression of nationalist organizations was at its severest. With their defeat in the offing, the Japanese imperialists arrested, questioned and punished anyone they suspected of being against them, wielding the national mobilization law and other fascist instruments at random.

Organizing such an anti-Japanese body as the Korean Nation-Building Union in such a situation showed how audacious Ryo Un Hyong was.

They kept their activities so thoroughly secret that our political operatives in Seoul did not know for some time that such an organization was active under their very noses. It was not until 1945, in fact, that we learned of the existence of the Nation-Building Union.

After the founding of this body, Ryo Un Hyong sent a man to me and a liaison officer to the Korean Independence Union. Unfortunately, the first had to return without finding our whereabouts. But his envoy met the members of the Korean Independence Union in Yanan, I was told.

The messenger failed to meet me because we were at the training base in the Soviet Union at that time.

As Ryo tried in every possible way to meet us after the Battle of Pochonbo, so we made efforts to cooperate with him. We entrusted one of our political operatives in Seoul with a mission to work with him. I gave him instructions to get in touch with him even if it required great efforts, but I was told later that he could not share secrets with Ryo because the latter never allowed the operative to approach him.

Ryo Un Hyong set up a military commission in the Nation-Building Union and planned actions in the rear of the Japanese imperialists. This accorded with the line of national resistance we advocated.

Our activities for cooperation with the anti-Japanese patriotic forces in China proper did not produce the desired results, because Japan collapsed so quickly. When the main force of the KPRA and the resistance organizations in the homeland were together launching the final operations for national liberation, the armed forces in China proper could not take part in these operations.

Kim Ku regretted this failure. He said that the surrender of the Japanese was rather a shock to him than good news, because their preparations for war, which had been made amid indescribable hardships for several years had come to naught. He worried that he would have no say in the future of Korea because he had done nothing in this war.

However, the efforts of both sides for cooperation were not totally futile, despite what he said. The efforts for national liberation were to be rewarded by history.

Our efforts for unity with the anti-Japanese patriotic forces promoted historical progress, and at last bore fruit in the founding of the united front after liberation, which embraced all sections of the population.

I think it was absolutely correct that ever since the beginning of the anti-Japanese revolution we considered united front work as a major objective and policy, and made every effort to realize it.

Frankly speaking, friction and conflict did exist between young communists and nationalists at one time. After the Wangqingmen incident, in which leaders of the Kukmin-bu such as Ko I Ho and Hyon Muk Kwan killed many of our comrades, we broke with the nationalists and condemned them sharply. At that time some of our comrades insisted that we should sever relations with the nationalists for ever.

However, no matter how tragic and heart-breaking the sacrifice at Wangqingmen, we could not afford to blame the whole nationalist camp for the crime committed by the reactionary leaders of the Kukmin-bu. We had to continue to uphold the united front policy for the sake of the great cause, swallowing our grief and indignation at the murder of our comrades. With a determination to start again with a clean slate, we contacted Ryang Se Bong's unit, which was fighting in southern Manchuria as the remnant force of the Kukmin-bu and even tried to cooperate with Kim Ku, who was a synonym for anti-communism.

If we had gone to extremes under the impulse of the moment and remained hostile to the nationalists without overcoming our mental sufferings, the united front would have remained an empty slogan.

Our painstaking and sincere efforts to build a united front moved even such an obstinate anti-communist figure as Kim Ku. But this was not accomplished overnight. Kim Ku did not choose alliance with communism, jettisoning anti-communism, because he had a grudge against the US military government which had not recognized the provisional government or because he was on bad terms with Syngman Rhee. It was our ardent patriotism, which we had cherished from the days of the anti-Japanese struggle, that welded Kim Ku and us into unity.

As historical facts show, the people we chose in those days gathered under the banner of the united front after liberation. Look at the politicians who took part in the North-South Joint Conference in April 1948. All the

renowned nationalists, particularly Kim Ku, Kim Kyu Sik, Jo So Ang, Choe Tong O, Om Hang Sop, Jo Wan Gu and Kim Wol Song, participated in the conference. To be exact, all the politicians of Kim Ku's provisional government came over to our side.

Ryo Un Hyong, the hero of the Korean Nation-Building Union, visited me in Pyongyang, the leaders of the Korean Independence Union visited Pyongyang with their colleagues, and Kim Won Bong came to Pyongyang and worked as the first Minister of State Control.

Already in 1946, the Democratic National United Front was formed in the northern half of Korea, embracing the patriotic forces of different parties, factions and classes.

Our will to achieve great national unity was hardened and consolidated in the days when we were preparing the final operations against Japan. Without such a process, we could not have made such persevering efforts to draw into the united front the patriotic forces from all walks of life at home and abroad who had different ideas and doctrines and history of struggle, in the complicated situation after liberation, in which sharp confrontation existed between patriotism and treachery to the nation, progress and conservatism, democracy and reaction.

The motto of our nation under the constant threat of foreign aggression must be great national unity.

I believe that the prosperity of the nation depends on to what extent the entire people are faithful to this motto.

Because we have a deep-rooted historical tradition of a consistent and fair policy on giving priority to the interests of the nation, transcending ideology, ideas, political views and systems as well as great achievements and valuable experience in implementing this policy, we have been able to set forth the Ten-Point Programme of the Great Unity of the Whole Nation and summon all the people to join the struggle for national reunification.

## 6. Across the Korea Strait

In the first half of the 1940s, when we were speeding up preparations to meet the great event of national liberation on our own initiative, we worked hard to build up a powerful force for national resistance in the homeland on the one hand, and on the other paid special attention to ensuring that our revolutionary organizations in Japan proper could play an important role in the resistance movement.

It can be said that we took two courses in our activities in Japan. One was to reinforce the existing ARF organizations and various other anti-Japanese organizations there so that they could join in the final offensive operations of the KPRA and form new organizations. The other was to infiltrate special operatives of the KPRA deep into the citadel of Japanese imperialism to collect military information to ensure victory in the military operations against Japan.

We sent political operatives to Japan in real earnest from the latter half of the 1930s, when the main force of the KPRA had advanced to Mt. Paektu and West Jiandao, and built up the subordinate organizations of the ARF. At the outset of the armed struggle, we Korean communists raised the motto, "Let us build a fortress of revolution in the heart of the enemy."

Needless to say, the political operatives had to be ready to risk their lives in order to infiltrate Japan. They knew that prisons and even the gallows were in store for them. Worse still, sea routes were the only way to enter Japan in those days. These routes were crawling with policemen–both uniformed and in plain clothes–detectives and secret agents. It was no easy job for the operatives to penetrate Japan this way. Nevertheless, we had to persist in our thrust into Japan.

The following document issued by the security police bureau of the Ministry of the Interior of Japan clearly shows how active the KPRA's military intelligence activities were in Japan proper:

"On Kim Il Sung's dispatching a special agent to Korea and Japan:

"The group of Kim Il Sung, an insurgent Korean in Manchuria ... is active in Japan. The latest information from the special mission in Korea of the ministry calls for stringent measures to deal with the situation.

"Prefectural and municipal authorities should pay special attention to security in seaports and place mobile police on trains.

"1. The purpose of the dispatch:

"The communist bandits, especially from the Soviet Union, send spies for intelligence service in Korea and Japan.

"2. Destinations:

"All the key military points along the Tumen-Jiamusi and Fengtian-Jilin railway lines, major ports in Korea (Chongjin, Rajin, Pusan, Mokpho, Wonsan, Kunsan and Sinuiju), and Shimonoseki and Tsuruga in Japan.

"3. Age, clothing and kit of the man dispatched:

"Age: 20- to 25-year old man of Manchurian-Korean origin.

"Clothing: single-breasted khaki suit and laced boots.

"Kit: various kinds of magazines on politics, the economy, and art and literature, and toilet articles in a suitcase.

"Other things are not clear, but the typical secret agent speaks Japanese fluently. He may have been a teacher or a policeman previously and can pass for a Japanese in his speech and manners." (Security Police Bureau, Ministry of the Interior, November 8, Showa 16 (1941).)

We considered Japan important because it was the citadel and the operations centre of Japanese colonial rule. A thrust into the centre would deal a telling blow to the heart of the enemy and be very effective in destroying their colonial rule.

Awakening to political awareness the Koreans in Japan, particularly the large number of young Koreans who had been drafted for labour there, and organizing them were necessary for collecting military and political

information for the impending operations against Japan. It was also necessary for saving them from being made cannon fodder and wresting them from the evil grip of Japanese fascism, and for winning them over to the side of the revolution en masse.

The anti-Japanese forces in Japan proper, together with the anti-Japanese patriotic forces in Korea and abroad, were considered formidable, in that they could join the KPRA in the final operations to destroy the Japanese imperialists.

The names of the eras of the successive emperors of Japan make an impression that they were willing to offer themselves to others. Meiji, Taisho and Showa are all nice-sounding. However, in the era of Showa, Japan turned its neighbouring countries into slaughter-houses of humanity and appeared as an international human butcher, inflicting misery and disaster upon hundreds of millions of people. Emperor Meiji, whose name literally means "clean politics", instigated his warriors to swallow up Korea, the East and if possible even the world. It was in the Meiji era that they extorted many concessions through wars against China and Russia. In this period they swallowed up our country by force of arms. In the era of Taisho, Japan committed a host of evils.

Down through history, the Japanese imperialists stopped at nothing to bleed the Koreans white.

From the moment they were taken away to Japan, Koreans were treated as beasts. No other country equalled Japan in treating human beings as dogs, pigs and cattle.

Koreans went to Japan not because they wanted to but because they were press-ganged by Japanese soldiers and policemen. Some were even dragged out of bed in the middle of the night.

These victims of Japan's forced-labour policy were dragooned and guarded to make sure they did not escape.

The Japanese in Korea used to say that they considered Koreans "the same as Japanese". But these were no more than honeyed words. If that was true, why did the Japanese treat the Koreans who were taken to Japan like cattle?

In literary works which describe old Japan you may come across the word *takobeya*, which means an “octopus room” or “octopus house”. Octopuses live in cracks in rocks. The Korean construction workers in Hokkaido called their lodgings *takobeya*, and likened them to narrow jars for growing bean sprouts. It was dangerous for them to call them “prisons”, so they called them “octopus rooms” or “octopus houses”.

The shacks where Koreans lodged in Japan were also called “peninsula rooms”, which meant rooms where the people from the peninsula lived. These were worse than *takobeya*. They were locked at night, and guard dogs made sure the Korean workers stayed inside.

When the workers spoke Korean, they were mercilessly pricked with something like a bamboo knife or beaten with pickaxe handles. Those who tried to run away were dragged around with strings through their noses. Worse still, Japanese contractors and employers did not hesitate to torture Korean workers with knives and hot lead. Some were even beaten to death and their corpses thrown into rivers or cement mixers.

In these circumstances, the Koreans, with a strong sense of national pride, could not bear such maltreatment and insults. Koreans are tender-hearted and simple, but they are full of courage.

The nearly two million Koreans who were conscripted for labour in Japan were all prepared to rise up and fall upon the Japanese when the anti-Japanese guerrillas pushed into Korea.

It was not only the workers who had such a secret dream; the more than 10,000 Korean students in Japan had the same dream.

It always cut me to the quick to hear about the miserable plight of the Koreans in Japan. As for the Koreans living in Manchuria, it can be said that they were more or less under our protection. The Koreans in Japan, however, had no protection. That was why we showed more sympathy for them.

Still, sympathy could not save them. Anybody can sympathize with fellow human beings, but organization is the greatest present that can be bestowed upon the exploited and oppressed masses by the communists. Organization alone was able to save the people from their wretched plight.

There were many organizations formed by the Koreans in Japan–communist, nationalist, “enlightenment”, students’ and so on.

The students played an important role in the anti-Japanese movement in Japan. They formed the Association of Korean Students in Tokyo and drafted a declaration of independence on the eve of the March First Popular Uprising. A copy of the declaration was smuggled into the homeland and had a strong impact on the independence campaigners.

When Japan annexed Korea by force of arms, a considerable number of Korean students in Tokyo and Kyoto returned home en masse in protest. This fact is enough to show how strong the spirit of resistance of the Korean students was.

The student movement that developed along nationalist lines opposed the enemy only by passive means such as petitions and demonstrations. Yet it exercised a considerable influence upon our compatriots.

Pak Ryol, a noted anarchist, was at one time a student in Japan. He was sentenced to penal servitude for life on a charge of conspiring to murder the Emperor of Japan. He was imprisoned for over 20 years, and only released after liberation.

Many of those who founded the Korean Communist Party in 1925 had studied in Japan. When Marxism spread to Japan they formed various ideological groups and organizations, and buckled down to studying and disseminating this new trend of thought.

Already in the early 1930s, the communist groups formed by Koreans in Japan numbered more than 30, with thousands of members. An organization of Korean communists existed as a branch of the Japanese Communist Party.

Influenced by the new trend of thought, the labour movement also developed among the Koreans in Japan. There was a Korean business group named the Tong-A Union in Osaka. In addition, Koreans formed many religious organizations in Japan, where there was also a branch of the Singan Association.

As you can see, there was a wide network of organizations among the Koreans in Japan. Needless to say, these organizations differed from each

other in their doctrines, opinions and modes of activity. One organization confined its activities to benevolent work.

However, we believed that each of them could serve as part of the groundwork on which to build up strong forces for national resistance. It was no problem to encourage the purely educational groups to join the practical revolutionary struggle. Since all these organizations were against the Japanese, their political transformation depended on our efforts.

All these organizations of our compatriots who were drafted to work in Japan were as good as time bombs laid in the heart of the Japanese imperialists. We were entrusted with the mission of exploding these bombs.

So we paid special attention to Japan proper, where there were hundreds of thousands of Koreans working, most of whom were opposed to Japanese imperialism.

To dispatch operatives to Japan was an urgent matter in view of the need to link the anti-Japanese Koreans' movement with the armed struggle against Japan, ensure unified leadership over the spontaneous and uncoordinated mass movement of the Koreans in all parts of Japan and develop this movement qualitatively in keeping with the requirements of the developing situation.

Operatives were sent to Japan mainly by the Pusan-Shimonoseki and Chongjin-Tsuruga ferry routes. Important political operatives who were to stay there for a long time took a long roundabout way via ports in third countries.

Students could travel to and from Japan with relative ease. In fact, rich people would often send their children to Japan to study, and these students would take lots of luggage with them.

I gave Pak Tal and Kim Jong Suk an assignment to look for promising students who could work as our operatives.

Kim Jong Suk discovered that self-supporting students from Phungsan had their own organization in Tokyo.

If we could transform this organization into a revolutionary one in the enemy's capital, we could open up a way to train Koreans as revolutionaries in the heart of Japan.

It was in the Tokyo-Yokohama area, an industrial centre with a dense population, that most of the Korean students and workers in Japan lived.

Giving Kim Jong Suk copies of the *Ten-Point Programme of the ARF*, I told her to make contact with the students from Phungsan and bring their organization in Tokyo under our influence.

Kim Jong Suk discussed this with Ju Pyong Pho.

It is said that Ju Pyong Pho picked Ri In Mo to be dispatched to Japan.

The students' organization was actually a friendship society of the self-supporting students from Phungsan in Tokyo. The members used to gather to discuss topical matters, including their problems, and exchange opinions on books of interest. It sometimes helped unemployed members to find jobs. It was purely a benevolent society, and its only political involvement consisted of denouncing the Japanese for claiming that "Korea and Japan are one," "Japanese and Koreans are of the same descent" and "Koreans are the same people as the Japanese."

In Tokyo Ri In Mo brought the influence of Mt. Paektu into this organization.

The members of this friendship society were greatly influenced by the Ten-Point Programme of the ARF and its Inaugural Declaration. The friendship society, which had simply writhed in agony without any definite goal or direction, was thus transformed into a patriotic anti-Japanese society.

In those days the Koreans studying in Japanese universities made every effort to give support to and join hands with us who were fighting on Mt. Paektu.

A considerable number of anti-Japanese underground organizations were formed in high schools, middle schools and colleges.

The nationalist group of Korean students in Kanazawa, which was detected by the Japanese police in the first half of 1944, was also a resistance organization formed by political operatives from our main force.

Ri Chol Su, a political operative of the KPRA, informed us of the activities of the Korean students who were studying at Kanazawa Middle School.

When he was doing political work in the guise of a student in Chongjin on a special mission, he planted an operative among the students who were going to Kanazawa Middle School to study.

The operative who crossed to Kanazawa got the students from Korea together and formed an unnamed organization in the school. It was not named in order to evade possible suppression by the enemy. The ultimate objective of this organization was to rise in armed revolt at the decisive moment in active response to the People's Revolutionary Army's thrust into the homeland.

According to a Japanese police source, members of this organization intended to go to Mt. Paektu to join the independence movement. Mt. Paektu was the base where Kim Il Sung, "an independence campaigner hailing from northern Korea," had organized a guerrilla army and was fighting to win back the independence of Korea by training many excellent Korean compatriots.

There were many anti-Japanese resistance organizations in Japan, but only a few of them openly announced that they were determined to go to Mt. Paektu to join our struggle. Most of the resistance organizations were encouraged by the news of our struggle, and fought in high spirits to join our final offensive operations. But, taking into consideration Japanese police pressure, they did not openly disclose their objective of struggle.

In Osaka there was a loyalty association which was composed of self-supporting students.

There were many self-supporting students and workers from Jeju Island and Kyongsang Province.

The people of Jeju Island have a strong sense of independence, I heard. According to the officials of Chongryon, the young men from Jeju Island who were living in the slum quarter of Osaka and attending evening classes at a university all had a strong nationalistic spirit. Where there is a strong nationalistic spirit, there will be an organization, and many revolutionaries will be produced.

Students from Jeju Island opened a fellowship night school with young workers from Jeju Island and formed an anti-Japanese friendship association.

After they received the Ten-Point Programme of the ARF from our operatives, they formed a new loyalty association with the members of the anti-Japanese friendship association and the students attending the evening course.

The programme and fighting task of this association were admirable.

To understand the character of this association, it is sufficient to examine its objective–that of immediately returning to Korea at the outbreak of war between the Soviet Union and Japan to lead the young compatriots to oppose Japan and unfold the independence movement and resolutely rise up in concert with Kim Il Sung's all-out campaign against Japan.

When the association was suppressed by the Japanese imperialists, those involved returned to Seoul and continued their revolutionary activities together with our operatives in the homeland. After liberation they devoted themselves to the struggle for the country's reunification in south Korea and Japan. They were even in touch with the guerrillas on Jeju Island.

Anti-Japanese underground organizations of Korean students were also formed in seminaries in Japan. A typical example was the nationalist group of the Korean students of the central seminary in Kobe.

What was remarkable about their struggle was that they nurtured national consciousness, and the spirit of independence and patriotism, praising me who was fighting on Mt. Paektu as a worthy independence campaigner.

The friendship association of Korean students organized at Okayama High School No. 6 was reorganized into a body subordinate to the ARF by Min Tok Won, who was studying at a university in Tokyo at that time.

Min Tok Won said that the restoration of Korea was the supreme task of the Korean compatriots, that the ARF appealed to all the patriotic forces of the nation to unite in the great war to liberate the motherland and that the students should enlighten and awaken the downtrodden Korean compatriots who had been dragged to Japan and unite them around the anti-Japanese organization so that they could rise up as soon as confusion was created in the interior of Japan and win independence. In those days operatives gave wide publicity to that strategy.

I heard that he assigned to Ryo Un Chang, Kim Jae Ho and other organization members the tasks they had to carry out during vacations. The organization members went to their native places on vacations and conducted enlightenment work among their families, relatives, friends and fellow students.

Enlightenment work at that time laid emphasis on giving publicity to the fighting achievements of the anti-Japanese guerrilla army. In addition, they explained the Ten-Point Programme of the ARF, and urged their listeners to rise up in the great war for national liberation if they truly wanted the independence of Korea. In this way they formed groups of near relatives and intimate friends who understood each other and extended their organizations.

There are many interesting anecdotes connected with Okayama High School No. 6. One interesting fact is that the organization members there advised their younger brothers and the friends of their younger brothers to go to Kim Il Sung's unit, when they were going to join the Children's Air Corps, deceived by the propaganda of the Japanese. In response to their appeal, several young men left for Manchuria in search of us, but failed to do so.

Some members of the Okayama branch of the ARF devoted themselves to the country's reunification after liberation, and others waged guerrilla struggles with Ri Hyon Sang on Mt. Jiri.

There were many anti-Japanese resistance organizations among the workers in those places where Koreans were concentrated–in the industrial centres like the Tokyo-Yokohama area, the Osaka-Kobe area, Hokkaido, Niigata, and so on.

What is remarkable among the organizations in the Tokyo-Yokohama area was the United Association that was formed in Tokyo. It was an anti-Japanese organization made up mainly of workers and some self-supporting students. The organization denied the orthodoxy of the Emperor of Japan, opposed factionalism and highly praised the activities of the Korean patriots and the struggle of the KPRA.

The organization gave wide publicity to us among the workers and self-supporting students.

An official Japanese source reported about the information service rendered by the organization members as follows:

"Kim Il Sung ... in northern Manchuria is our fellow countryman who has such great influence that even the Japanese army is very worried. He sometimes moves into Korea and it is truly worth respecting that he never hits the houses of the Korean compatriots but attacks the Japanese and their houses." (*Monthly Report by the Special Political Police,* p. 202, Security Police Bureau, Ministry of the Interior, March Showa 17 (1942).)

The strategy of the organization was to receive military training, availing themselves of the volunteer system of the enemy and level their guns at the Japanese imperialists when the opportunity arose. The organization asserted that Korea's independence could only be achieved through the communist movement.

The following decision made by a workers' organization member in Tokyo clearly shows how ardently the Korean workers in the Tokyo-Yokohama area revered the great leader and how high their anti-Japanese spirit was.

"1. Kim Il Sung has organized the Korean Independence Corps in Manchukuo and is fighting. He will be the President of Korea in the future. We shall follow him.

"2. It is useless to serve in the Japanese army as conscripts and die in battle for Japan. We shall go to Kim Il Sung and work for Korea." *(Monthly Report by the Special Political Police,* p. 75, Security Police Bureau, Ministry of the Interior, March Showa 19 (1944).)

In the 1920s, the General Federation of Korean Trade Unions in Japan was organized in the Tokyo-Yokohama area. The federation was disbanded long ago, but the labour movement, though insignificant, continued its tradition. When the Mt. Paektu wind blew into the area, the existing organizations were reorganized on revolutionary lines and new ones were formed.

We sent many operatives to Hokkaido. Among the operatives dispatched to the area there was a man who worked under the assumed name of Kim

Thae Hyon. His destination was Hokkaido, but he did not go directly there. He went to the construction site of the military base in the Kuril Islands and formed secret organizations, giving wide publicity to the Ten-Point Programme of the ARF. In the course of this he was arrested. However, he escaped on the way to the prison and went underground. He was in hiding for some time and then went to Hokkaido to start his work. He rallied around anti-Japanese organizations the Korean workers who had been forced to work in coal mines, mines, airports and at hydroelectric power station sites. I heard that his political work was a success.

He said to the workers: "Do you know what is meant by motherland? Because you are deprived of your motherland, you are forced to cross the sea and here in Hokkaido you undergo indescribable hardships. All the people in the motherland are fighting at the cost of blood to win back the country. In the forests of Mt. Paektu many people have taken up arms and are fighting against the Japanese army at the cost of their lives. We can live only when we have our motherland. We must fight together with Kim Il Sung's army and liberate the country as soon as possible. To this end, we must form organizations and unite the people around us." Then he explained, item by item, the Ten-Point Programme of the ARF.

He formed organization with those who supported the programme. The workers who were won over in this way stood in the forefront of strikes in several backbreaking workplaces in Hokkaido. The miners' revolt in the Yubari coal mine was organized by this operative.

The book *Forcible Drafting of Koreans, Records of Forced Labour* published in Japan gives a relatively detailed account of the real state of the organizations and their anti-Japanese and anti-war struggles conducted in Hokkaido, southern Sakhalin, the Kuril Islands and other parts of Japan. This book was edited by the Commission of Investigation into the Forcible Drafting of Koreans. Fujishima Udai, the vice-chairman of the commission, is a famous critic. He visited our country on several occasions. He was the first Japanese to visit the revolutionary battle sites in our country.

The book describes how our operative who infiltrated one of the construction sites in Hokkaido gave publicity to the activities of the KPRA among the Korean workers and inspired them to join the anti-Japanese struggle. He often organized sabotage of the production of war supplies and instigated the Koreans to run away.

The runaways set fire to other work sites.

In those days the Japanese imperialists, with their defeat near at hand, desperately sped up the production of munitions under the slogan “Produce, supply and win!” The communists and anti-war forces in Japan fought under the slogan “Cannot produce, cannot supply and cannot win!”

It greatly facilitated the defeat of Japan and the liberation of Korea that our operatives slowed down munitions production, enlisting anti-Japanese forces to this end.

I heard that our operative who infiltrated Sapporo in Hokkaido formed an underground organization among the Korean workers drafted by force to the construction site of the military base there. He gradually expanded the organization and even hastened the preparations for an armed revolt.

Our operatives were also active in schools at different levels, including the university in Hokkaido. Under their influence, Japanese workers and progressive youth and students also joined in the anti-imperialist and anti-war struggle.

The Osaka-Kobe area, a major industrial centre in Japan, was also greatly influenced by our operatives.

What was striking among the organizations in this area was the Special Youth Concord Training Force Association, which was formed by the Korean workers drafted into a factory in Hyogo Prefecture. The operative who infiltrated there was educated and trained by our political worker. His name is recorded as Ko Yong Sok in a secret Japanese document. It seems to be an alias, since I don’t remember such a name.

Following is a report from a Japanese government office concerning the incident of the Special Youth Concord Training Force Association:

“On the roundup and investigation of the Special Youth Concord Training Force Association, a Korean nationalist group in Amagasaki:

“A leader ... Pyong Gyu (27 years old) ... who had been gradually awakened to national consciousness, met by chance Ko Yong Sok who was under the command of Kim Il Sung ... independence movement of Korea in Manchuria. Ko told him that a Japanese-Soviet War would break out before long, that Koreans were to rise up in response to it, that Kim Il Sung in Manchuria was to thrust into Korea in August Showa 20 (1945) and that he had been secretly dispatched by Kim Il Sung, entrusted with the mission of uniting the Korean youth and securing grain for preparatory work. Ko added that he hoped that the young men of Korea would play an active role since they were about to greet the moment of Korea’s independence. Instigated by Ko, Pyong Gyu sneaked into Japan as an immigrant worker to visit places where many young Korean men worked in order to form a large organization through collective living and rise up in response to Kim Il Sung group’s thrust into Korea. He moved to the Amagasaki factory of Otani Heavy Industries at the end of March Showa 19 (1944), brought to national awareness an immigrant Korean worker, his colleague, and promoted unity. He is known to be speeding up his plot to rally workers.” *(Monthly Report concerning Korea,* June Showa 20 (1945).)

When we were at the training base in the Soviet Far East region, we dispatched many political workers to the homeland, Manchuria and Japan. They successfully prepared national resistance forces to join in the final offensive of the KPRA.

Among those political workers were people such as Kim Chang Guk, who had been dispatched by us, others who were sent by the homeland organization under our guidance after receiving our directives, and special scouts who were connected with a detachment of the IAF. In any case, all the political operatives played an active part in thoroughly preparing all the anti-Japanese forces in Japan, in keeping with our plan of national resistance.

The Kim Il Sung Corps formed a powerful anti-Japanese force at the Niigata Ironworks and slowed down the production of major munitions, thus weakening Japan’s war capability. It also succeeded in helping dozens of new draftees to escape en masse.

The young Koreans working in Kyoto set an objective of helping to

achieve the independence of Korea with Mt. Paektu as their base in the future, and formed anti-Japanese organizations in several factories.

Indeed, our organizations struck roots in all parts of Japan, from Hokkaido in the north to Kyushu in the south, wherever Koreans were living, and among university students, seminarists, coal miners and labour draftees.

The following vividly describes how panic-stricken the Japanese police were at the infiltration of Japan by the KPRA political operatives and special scouts.

A liner that plied between northern Korea and Japan needed additional seamen. Usually applicants were rare, but on this occasion there were 47 to 48 applicants in each port. These men seemed to be relatively educated and were fluent in Japanese. Suspicious, the ship's captain refrained from employing them. He explained his reasons as follows:

"According to information, they were all strongly imbued with nationalism. Knowing that crossing to Japan is not easy, they applied to become seamen, which would make it rather easy for them to sail to Japan. When the ship called at Japanese ports, they intended to slip out of the ship and into Tokyo, Osaka and other large cities. It seems they planned to agitate among Koreans in Japan, awaken them to national consciousness and recruit them for seditious actions when the situation at home and abroad permitted. It is necessary therefore to take strict precautions against Koreans sailing from Manchuria and the movements of suspicious Korean sailors." *(Monthly Report by the Special Political Police,* p. 77, Security Police Bureau, Ministry of the Interior, August Showa 16 (1941).)

It can be said that Japan was sitting on the edge of a volcano on the verge of eruption, because of the activities of the resistance organizations of Koreans, who had formed a continuous network all over Japan. This was the result of positive struggle on the part of our political operatives and small groups.

Among sober-minded Koreans there was no one naive enough to think that the future of the nation could be decided at the negotiation table of world powers. The unanimous conviction of our people that an armed struggle was the only way to save the country and nation made it possible to rally all the patriotic forces of Korea around the People's Revolutionary Army.

The Koreans turned to Mt. Paektu for no other reason. Because our revolutionary army was there, they always talked about Mt. Paektu. In ancient times Mt. Paektu was loved by the nation as an ancestral mountain, but from the time when the Korean communists started the struggle against the Japanese there it was loved by the nation as the sacred mountain of revolution.

It is of great significance indeed that we rapidly developed an armed struggle and firmly built up a Juche-oriented revolutionary force with it as the main axis. As the whole course of the anti-Japanese revolution shows, an armed struggle is vital to the national liberation struggle in colonies. A powerful armed struggle can quickly awaken the people to political awareness and easily mobilize the broad masses to join the war of resistance against imperialist aggressors.

The pride of our nation that had been damaged by the loss of its sovereignty soared up as a result of our armed struggle on Mt. Paektu. This revolutionary pride was incomparably more worthy than the simple national pride Koreans had cherished previously. That is why we can say that our people's genuine pride and love for the motherland originated on Mt. Paektu.

Under the influence of the armed struggle against Japan, the national resistance organizations built up in Japan enhanced the consciousness of national independence through practical struggle in various forms and made contributions to hastening the defeat of the Japanese imperialists.

But for such a history, the Chongryon movement could not have developed as we see today. Chongryon flourishes because it stands on a solid foundation.

# 7. The Final Campaign

When the great leader Comrade Kim Il Sung was on a visit to the USSR after the Korean war, a senior official of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, greeting him in the Kremlin, introduced the Soviet cadres one by one to him. Among them was Minister of Defence Marshal Malinovsky. When it was his turn to be introduced, Malinovsky said, with a smile: "We are old acquaintances, so there is no need to introduce me to Comrade Kim Il Sung. When he was in the Far East region, we met each other for the first time in Khabarovsk."

Comrade Kim Il Sung warmly shook hands with him, saying, "You're right. We are old comrades-in-arms."

The leading officials of the two countries were quite surprised.

How did the acquaintance of Comrade Kim Il Sung and Malinovsky begin? What happened in Khabarovsk?

The preparations for the final campaign to defeat Japanese imperialism and liberate our motherland were promoted full steam after victory over Nazi Germany.

In February 1945 a closed summit conference of three countries–the Soviet Union, the USA and Great Britain–was held in Yalta. By that time the Soviet forces had taken Budapest, the capital of Hungary, and were making preparations for the final assault on Berlin. The defeat of Germany was only a matter of time.

A major item on the agenda discussed at the Yalta Conference was Soviet participation in the war against Japan after the defeat of Germany. The Soviet Union promised that it would participate in the war against Japan two or three months after victory over Germany. This decision was a great encouragement to the oppressed nations in the East under the rule of Japanese imperialism and to the revolutionaries in this part of the world.

We sped up preparations for meeting the approaching great event of national liberation on our own initiative.

Not long after the Soviet forces started their final offensive on Berlin, the Headquarters of the Far East Front Forces informed us of the defeat of Germany. The officers and men of the Soviet army in the IAF held a congratulatory party all night that day. It seemed that they were emptying the stores and dispensaries of liquor. The Soviet people were heavy drinkers. The Soviets, Koreans and Chinese danced and sang in the joy of victory. We all regarded the victory of the Soviet Union as our own. Italy's defeat was followed by Germany's defeat, and it was clear that this would soon be followed by the collapse of Japan.

The fascist forces that had once been rampant in the world were now tumbling one after the other to the grave in both the East and the West. Now it was Japan's turn to take the baton.

We had to make preparations for expediting Japan's defeat and win the country's liberation.

After the party to celebrate victory over Germany, the Korean commanding personnel in the IAF gathered and discussed for hours the operations for the liberation of the country. It was not a formal meeting, but its atmosphere was very sincere and solemn. Full of passion, everyone was keen to destroy the Japanese imperialists and win back the country. We were full of enthusiasm to cross the Tuman there and then and make a thrust into the homeland.

The focal point of discussion was the question of liberating the country by our own efforts and of national resistance. They said to the effect that we must all maintain the Juche-orientated stand that we must liberate the country by our own efforts; to this end, the political and military capabilities of the KPRA must be increased to the maximum and the resistance organizations in the homeland prepared to the full, so that when the KPRA launched the campaign to liberate the country, the entire nation would rise in revolt in response to the campaign; and we must strengthen our military ties with the Soviet and Chinese forces and make preparations for cooperative operations

in the context of the overall operations of the Soviet Union against Japan.

Afterwards I had a consultation with the Headquarters of the Soviet Far East Front Forces on several occasions about our military and political cooperation with the Soviet Union. Sometimes I went there with Zhou Bao-zhong or Zhang Shou-jian, and at other times with Kim Chaek or Choe Yong Gon.

To cope with a possible invasion by Japan, the Soviet Union had made careful preparations of its own for its campaign against Japan, before and after the defeat of Germany.

Around Juche 32(1943) when the Soviet Union was fighting a full-scale war against Germany, the Soviet leadership took measures for strengthening the section of the General Staff in charge of the Far East, and reorganized the Far East forces for wartime operations. Stalin replaced the commanders of the Far East Front and armies with generals who had rich experience in the war against Germany. Front Commander Apanasenko was sent to the Voronezh Front south of Moscow as deputy commander and Purkayev, commander of the Kalinin Front, was appointed commander of the Far East Front.

In Juche 33 (1944) when the Soviet forces were actively engaged in military operations in Eastern Europe, Stalin ordered reinforcements to be sent rapidly to the Far East region so as to increase the forces there to the maximum.

After the defeat of Germany, the Soviet Union began to make a final review of its plans of operations against Japan.

On our part, we also formulated the directions of operations and concrete plans for actions of the KPRA. Needless to say, the plans envisaged cooperation with the Soviet forces.

The high-ranking commanding personnel of the Soviet Union were expecting a great deal from the activities of the KPRA and the NAJAA. All the units of the IAF increased the intensity of their training several-fold in anticipation of the forthcoming campaign against Japan. The military training in these days paid attention to making all the national units of the IAF keep in step in the joint campaign while sustaining their own characteristics.

For the joint campaign to prove effective, it was important to define the

mission of the national units in the campaign, and ensure cooperation between different arms and services. The IAF channelled its due efforts into solving these problems in training.

The units of the KPRA and the NAJAA also made tireless efforts to perfect the tactics of guerrilla warfare created and practised in the years of anti-Japanese war and to find out the methods of employing these tactics effectively in large-scale regular-army operations. While promoting training in all forms simultaneously, we put emphasis on training for reconnaissance, engineering, wireless operation and airborne training–skills badly needed for the campaign to liberate the country. We also made a full study of the latest experiences of the Soviet forces in the war against Germany, and the level of our assimilation of the experiences was high.

In the early days of the IAF the Soviet teachers at our training base had mostly been participants in the Civil War. But in the days when we were making final preparations for the campaign against Japan most of the teachers were veterans of the Soviet-German War. As they had been tempered in modern warfare for some years, their lessons were fresh.

In order to get the resistance organizations in the homeland ready, we dispatched operatives to many parts of the homeland, including the Paektusan secret camp and Mt. Kanbaek. In cooperation with the political workers who had already been guiding the organizations, they stepped up preparations for the final campaign.

Around this time I also went to the homeland to direct the activities of the units in the homeland in relation to the impending operations, and at the same time devoted much time to coordinating our operational plans with the overall preparations of the Soviet Union for its operations against Japan.

In the summer of 1945 the Soviet Union organized the General Headquarters of the Soviet Far East Forces, with Vasilievsky as the commander-in-chief, and put three large front armies under its command. The Zabaikal Front Army was commanded by Malinovsky, the 1st Far East Front Army by Meretskov, and the 2nd Far East Front Army by Purkayev, former Far East Front commander.

The theatre of operations of the 1st Far East Front Army covered Korea and the northeast area of China south of Harbin, and that of the 2nd Far East Front Army was the northeast area of China west of Khabarovsk.

The IAF were originally scheduled to operate under the 2nd Far East Front Army, but the units of the KPRA mostly kept liaison with the 1st Far East Front Army. After the General Headquarters of the Soviet Far East Forces were formed, I dealt mostly with Meretskov and Stykov, commander and military commissar of the 1st Far East Front Army, respectively. I was on intimate terms also with Chistyakov, commander of the 25th Army, and Lebezev, one of its commanders. With the beginning of the campaign against Japan, they were to push into Korea.

The General Headquarters of the Soviet Far East Forces were situated in Khabarovsk. Frequenting the city, I became acquainted with Vasilievsky and Malinovsky.

In the summer of 1945 the General Headquarters frequently convened meetings for the joint operations.

Vasilievsky explained in detail the operational plans of the General Headquarters. He said that they planned to encircle the main force of the Kwantung Army and destroy it piecemeal.

We consistently maintained our original operational plan for the liberation of Korea.

We had planned to move the units of the KPRA that had assembled in the area of Mt. Kanbaek by prearranged routes to different provinces to liberate them, and airlift the units that remained at the training base in the Soviet Far East region to Pyongyang and other areas to occupy the secret bases that had been built and launch military operations in full swing. In addition, the small units and political workers of the KPRA active in the homeland were to expand resistance organizations on a large scale and rouse the people to national resistance so that all the people would fight in response to the offensive of the KPRA all over the country.

I still think this operational plan was absolutely correct, because it could ensure a quick liberation in the military and political situation of our country

in those days. The airlifted paratroopers in cooperation with the national resistance forces in all provinces would strike the enemy from all quarters without difficulty.

The Soviet forces were to attack the fortified zones along the coast after bombing and bombardment, and the infantry units were to push in waves across the frontier with armoured vehicles in the van. These actions were promised by the Soviet Union.

With the final campaign impending, we dispatched many small units and groups to the homeland.

We also gave all the guerrilla units, people's armed corps and resistance organizations assignments to abolish the colonial ruling machinery after the defeat of Japanese imperialism, protect the people's lives and property, and set up Party organizations and the organs of people's power.

Of the commanding personnel of the Soviet forces in the Far East, I met Meretskov most frequently.

The general, with a little bald head, was in his late forties. In view of his past record, I thought it was not fortuitous that Stalin had appointed him a front commander in the Maritime region. Having served as an officer in a unit in the Far East, he had become the commander of the Leningrad Military District. Then he commanded the 7$^{th}$ Army that fought in the main thrust in the war against Finland. He had once been Chief of General Staff of the Soviet army, and before coming to the Far East he had commanded the Karelian Front northwest of Moscow.

Seeing me, he shook my hands passionately as if he were meeting an old friend of his, saying he was glad to see me. Offering me a seat, he said, "In the war against Japanese imperialism, the Korean comrades are our seniors. Your role in the campaign against Japan is very important. We expect a great deal from your activities."

After acquainting himself briefly with the activities of the Korean Contingent in the IAF, he asked me to explain in detail the military and political situation in Korea. He and his colleagues showed great interest in the deployment of the military forces and Japan's method of administering

Korea, the Korean people's struggle against Japan, the distribution of revolutionary organizations and the activities of the armed corps associated with the secret bases.

One day on the eve of the campaign, I went to Moscow with the commanding officers of the IAF for a meeting convened by the General Staff of the Soviet army. Meretskov, Stykov and other senior officers of different front headquarters related to the campaign against Japan were already there. It was there that I met Commander-in-Chief Vasilievsky again.

They all expressed their support for our plan of operations to liberate Korea by airborne operations. At that time the units of the NAJAA were given a mission to fly into major cities in Manchuria to open the routes for the advancing Soviet ground forces.

In Moscow I met Zhukov. In those days he was commander of the Soviet occupation force in Germany and Soviet representative on the allied control commission for Germany. I didn't know why he was in Moscow, but the meeting with him was very impressive. This famous veteran general was quite magnanimous and open-minded.

The Soviet people accorded cordial hospitality to us, going far beyond diplomatic convention.

During our sojourn in Moscow we visited the Lenin Mausoleum, the History Museum and the famous battle sites related to the defence of Moscow. We again enjoyed the film, *Chapayev* .

I did not know why, but even after the meeting the Soviet people showed us around Moscow without being in any hurry to send us back to the Far East.

After several days they introduced us to Zhdanov, Member of the Political Bureau and Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. Stykov was already there.

Saying that he was meeting us, the envoys from the east, on behalf of Stalin, he highly praised the anti-Japanese armed struggle we had conducted. He had heard much about Kim Il Sung, the Korean guerrilla leader, from Stalin and Stykov, and he was glad to see me much younger than he had

heard, he said. According to him, Stalin was also showing exceptional interest in our activities.

Our talk with Zhdanov began with the question of the present military and political situation. During the talk I felt he wanted to hear my opinion on how to develop Korea after liberation into a democratic, independent state.

In the middle of the talk he suddenly asked me how many years it would take for the Korean people to build a sovereign state after the liberation of their country.

I replied it would take two or three years at most.

He seemed happy to hear this. He even rubbed his palms. At the same time, it was evident he was surprised at my answer.

At that time I guessed why he was so interested in our building of an independent and sovereign state after liberation and why he looked dubious about my answer.

This was because Roosevelt had proposed trusteeship when discussing the postwar Korean question at the Yalta Conference. Roosevelt consistently maintained that the small nations in Asia to be liberated from colonial rule should be educated in democracy under the patronage of big powers.

In the spring of 1943, in talks in Washington with the US Secretary of State and the British Foreign Minister, Roosevelt claimed that Korea and the Indochinese nations must be placed under the trusteeship of big powers. He said that about 40 years would be needed as a transitional period for Koreans to win full independence. It seems he did not have a high opinion of the Korean nation.

I stressed that in the course of the lengthy anti-Japanese armed struggle and national liberation struggle our people had been awakened to political consciousness and tempered greatly, that in the course of this a steadfast leading hard core and broad sections of the patriotic forces that could build a state by their own efforts had been prepared, and that we had acquired rich fighting experience, boundless creativity, seasoned organizing ability and a strong capability to mobilize the people.

Listening carefully to my explanation, Zhdanov asked in what form his

country could give assistance to the Korean people in their struggle to build their country after liberation.

I said, "Your country fought a four-year war with Germany and it will fight another big war with Japan. So how can you help us? Your help will, as a matter of fact, be welcome, but we are going to build the country by ourselves to the best of our ability. Though difficult, it will be beneficial for the future. In our country worship of great powers has existed historically as the root cause of national ruin. We're determined to prevent this malady from doing harm to the building of our new country. What we expect from you is your political support. We hope that in future the Soviet Union will actively support our country in the international arena, and make efforts to ensure that the Korean issue is settled in the interests of the Korean people and in accordance with their wishes."

Zhdanov was satisfied with my answer.

He said, "Some days ago I met a man from an Eastern European country. As soon as he saw me, he told me that the economy of his country was basically backward and the difficulties it faces are manifold owing to the devastation of the war, and that the Soviet Union should help his country as a big brother. What a contrast between his attitude and yours! I wonder if this is the difference between the East and the West, the difference between the country where the sun rises and the country where the sun sets?"

His last words were of course a joke.

How could there be any difference between a sun-rising country and a sun-setting country? If any, the difference was that the leaders of the Eastern European countries believed in the Soviet Union more than in the strength of their own people. Most of these countries were liberated by the Soviet army, so they built socialism after the Soviet fashion, relying utterly on that country, and aping everything the Soviet people did and said. Their worship of the Soviet Union was so extreme that it was said that when it was raining in Moscow, they also raised their umbrellas. One of the reasons why socialism went to ruin in Eastern Europe was precisely the worship of the great power.

Zhdanov said he would report to Stalin the result of his interview with me.

Later I met him on several occasions, deepening our friendship. Apparently Meretskov also told Stalin a lot about me.

I still remember meeting Meretskov in Lushun. I went there immediately after the liberation of Korea and met him there. While talking this and that with me, he said he would soon be going to Moscow to see Stalin and asked me if I had anything to request of Stalin.

I raised the question of abolishing the currency notes issued by the Soviet army headquarters and issuing our own national currency, the matter of nationalizing industries, the need for Soviet assistance in our work of reorganizing the KPRA into a modern regular army, and some other problems.

In subsequent days, Meretskov helped us in our work in every way. When he was in command of the military district of the Maritime region, he often visited Pyongyang, and each time he would visit my house before visiting the Soviet army headquarters.

Once he came to Pyongyang with Malinovsky. The commander of the Soviet forces in Korea tried to guide them to the hotel used exclusively by foreigners. Saying they had come to visit me and would ask my wife to cook them dumplings, they declined his offer, and came straight to my house.

They did not care whether I was at home or not. They were quite magnanimous and unpretentious. But Kim Jong Suk was embarrassed as she had to receive the guests without any prior notice.

Malinovsky told her that they had informed me when they were leaving for Pyongyang, and it seemed I was very busy as I had failed to come to the airport and I was not at home. He said they would help themselves to food without waiting for the busy man. He then asked Kim Jong Suk to bring Korean noodles and "Korean bread".

After the interview with Zhdanov I returned to the Far East region with Stykov.

My friendship with Stykov, established in the Far East region, continued

in later years. He exerted great efforts for the settlement of the Korean issue. As head of the Soviet delegation to the Joint USSR-US Commission organized by the decision of the Moscow conference of three foreign ministers, he conducted energetic diplomatic activities for the reunification and independent development of Korea.

On returning from Moscow, I summoned the officers of the KPRA and briefed them on my activities in Moscow.

Under the agreement it had made with its allies, the Soviet Union declared war against Japan on August 9, 1945, and entered into hostilities with the Japanese army.

On the same day, I ordered the KPRA to start the general offensive for liberating the motherland.

I saw to it that the KPRA units, before launching the final operations, surprised several points of strategic importance in the fortified zones in the border area including Tho-ri, Unggi County, and Nanbieli and Dongxingzhen, Hunchun County, creating confusion in the enemy defence system and striking the enemy troops and weapons in the fortified zones.

In their joint operations with us, the 1st Far East Front Army headquarters was most intent on the choice of objectives to which they could deal the most effective blow, the choice of the link in the whole chain of fortified border areas, that, when struck, would shake the overall defence system of the Japanese army. I decided to solve this problem by our efforts.

By 1945 the Japanese army had built many concrete pillboxes in the areas bordering Manchuria, the Soviet Union and Mongolia. The four fortified zones built in Korea were bases intended to spearhead an attack on the Soviet Union. Massed in the fortified zones that had been built up for 10 years along the Korean-Soviet, Korean-Manchurian and Soviet-Manchurian borders were large forces of three services, including the Kwantung Army and the Japanese army in Korea. The enemy boasted that these fortified zones formed an “impregnable defence line”.

All these fortresses had been built underground and kept secret. To prevent the secret leaking out, the Japanese imperialists killed the people who

had been mobilized to construct the fortresses. These fortresses were the greatest obstacles to the campaign against Japan. The Soviet officers considered it a major problem to destroy the Kwantung Army behind the line of these fortifications, but I considered that the most difficult problem was to break through the line. So I thought it necessary to probe the fortified zones at a few points.

When I suggested reconnaissance in force before starting the campaign, the high-ranking officers of the 1st Far East Front Army were dubious. I insisted that, in order to make a breakthrough for the campaign, we had to strike a few targets of military importance so as to expose at once the defence system the enemy had reinforced in secret and the troops and weapons under cover.

Thus, one unit of the KPRA stormed Tho-ri at a corner of the fortifications on the Tuman River in heavy rain on the eve of the campaign. Tho-ri was situated at a vantage point between the Kyonghung fortified zone and the Unggi-Rajin fortified zone. Our occupation of Tho-ri would compel the enemy to retreat from a wide area around it and also would threaten the Kyonghung fortified zone.

Our men set fire to the police station there, and liberated the village. It was the first village the revolutionary army liberated in its final operations for liberating the whole country.

The enemy dispatched reinforcements, but when they reached Ungsang Pass, they saw the police station in flames and retreated in fear.

A Japanese publication carries the following account of the KPRA unit's raid on Tho-ri:

"At 11: 50 pm on August 8 a group of 80 Koreans, with Soviet soldiers, crossed the Tuman in speedboats and raided Tho-ri. This village is within hailing distance of Soviet territory. The police station was the first to be attacked. ...

"Around 3 am on the 9th ... trucks were sent there, but it was too late ... and the trucks turned back at Ungsang Pass." (*Records of the Conclusion of War in Korea,* p. 29.)

The breakthrough made by the audacious actions of the detachment, an

advance party, of the KPRA carried out in cooperation with the Soviet forces was decisive in our effort to carry out the operational plans for concluding the war against Japan at lightning speed.

The KPRA units which had been occupying offensive positions around the Kanbaeksan secret camp for the final operation advanced as planned, strengthening their ranks; the units on the Tuman River broke through the enemy fortresses on the frontier with one fell swoop, liberated Kyongwon and Kyonghung, and made a thrust into Unggi, liberating wide areas of the homeland. Some units, acting as an advance party of the landing force, landed at Unggi in close cooperation with the ground force and, exploiting this success, continued to advance to the area of Chongjin.

Other units, having taken Jinchang, Dongning, Muling and Mudanjiang, pursued the enemy troops and gave fatal blows to the Kwantung Army before pressing on towards the Tuman River.

The small units and political workers from the KPRA who had been active in the homeland roused paramilitary corps, armed resistance organizations and broad sections of the people to armed revolt. They harassed the enemy in the rear by boldly attacking the Japanese imperialist aggressor troops, gendarmerie and police establishments, in strong support of the advancing KPRA units.

Han Chang Bong from Taoquanli fought outstandingly when attacking the fortress at Kyonghung. As a member of the advance party of the IAF, he crossed the Tuman before anybody else. Having crossed the river, the advance party, with the help of the local revolutionary organizations, destroyed the enemy forts and pillboxes and liberated Wonjong.

In the operation for breaking through the fortifications on the Tuman River, the Battle of Mt. Mayu in Hunyung is a famous one.

The enemy had bragged that the fortifications around Mts. Mayu and Wolmyong were impregnable. Having blown up the bridge at Hunyung, the enemy entrenched themselves on the heights where pillboxes had been built and prepared for a do-or-die battle.

Pak Kwang Son and the scouts of the KPRA, disguised as Japanese,

crossed the Tuman in the dead of night and appeared at the back of Mt. Mayu to reconnoitre the enemy's movements in detail. Two enemy battalions were defending the mountain. The scouts transmitted the enemy situation to the unit and fought in the van of the unit that made a forced crossing of the Tuman. The people's armed corps in the area of the mountain blew up the enemy's powder magazines and ammunition dumps, rendering a great contribution to the victory of the overall battle.

After raiding Tho-ri, O Paek Ryong's advance party performed fine exploits in the Battle of Manhyang Pass.

The pass was an important inland gateway, from which the enemy was able to keep the Unggi-Rajin fortress safe.

When the unit's advance was frustrated at the pass, O Paek Ryong volunteered to destroy the enemy's pillboxes and gun emplacements on the pass with his advance party. Climbing the pass on all fours with his men, he blew up all the pillboxes and ensured the unit's advance. The Soviet officers and men, with their thumbs up, said the Korean guerrillas were the best.

One of our men fell in action the day before the country's liberation. He was Kim Pong Sok, the orderly I treasured the most. He had performed many liaison missions for me. Although he was an orderly, he performed political work efficiently, to the surprise of many people.

Everybody would be surprised if they knew that in the late 1930s he, along with Yun Pyong Do, had gone on an assignment for me to Longjing, a base of the enemy "punitive" forces, entered a middle school and worked among the young people and students there.

It was also Kim Pong Sok who had gone to Seoul as an escort for Pak In Jin and attended a commemorative ceremony of Chondoist believers, exerting a revolutionary influence on the upper echelons of that religion.

He fell in action on his way back after conveying an order from me to O Paek Ryong, who was participating in the operations for liberating the country. I had dispatched Kim Pong Sok to communicate to O Paek Ryong my detailed instructions for the joint operations with the Soviet army. Straight after he had performed his mission, Kim Pong Sok had turned back.

On his way back he had popped into a house for a meal, but the owner informed the police. Kim fought with the pursuing policemen bravely before dying a heroic death. It was August 14, 1945. I was unable to find his dead body. I was told that the visitors to the Revolutionary Martyrs Cemetery would halt in front of his bust, deeply regretful for his death on the eve of the country's liberation.

Rajin fell thanks to the Rajin People's Armed Corps.

The naval force of the Soviet Pacific Fleet in charge of the operation for landing at Rajin thought that the operation would be difficult, for it was a large fortified area the enemy had built up with much effort. Enemy warships were at anchor all the time, and there was an anti-aircraft gun emplacement on a height near the town.

When the Soviet force landed at the city, it had already been liberated.

As the Soviet force opened fire from warships and planes on the city, the Japanese army entrenched there first thought it was a clash like the Zhanggufeng incident; they were resolved to defend the city at any cost. At this time a small unit of the people's armed corps stole its way into the city at night, fired upon the headquarters of the fortress, gendarmerie station and police station, and set fire to the munitions depot of the garrison. In the meantime, the main force of the armed corps, that had been waiting, entered the city and attacked the enemy from all sides.

Here is the memoir of a Soviet officer who participated in the battle to liberate Rajin.

"As we approached the city we could hear the crackle of machine-guns and the roar of artillery fire.

"Korean peasants who had rushed to the outskirts of the city waved their hands, shouting 'Hurrah!' They told us Kim Il Sung's guerrilla army had been fighting against the Japanese army for two days. The small plazas and narrow streets were crowded with the enemy's military trucks and loaded carts.

"We realized that the Korean guerrillas had cut off the retreat of the Japanese soldiers, so that they could not escape from the city. Pinned down by the guerrillas and us, the Japanese samurais threw down their arms and began to surrender. We saw about 100 armed men rushing

towards us from the outskirts of the city. ‘We’re soldiers of Kim Il Sung’s guerrilla army,’ said their commander to the colonel of the tank unit.” (*Notes on Korea*, I. Urzhmelashuwili.)

The people’s armed corps under various names took part in the battles to destroy the Japanese imperialists in nearly all parts of the Korean provinces.

In North Hamgyong Province the people’s armed corps organized in the area of Kyonghung and Unggi fought well from the first day of the campaign, in cooperation with the allied forces of Korea and the Soviet Union.

The armed corps in Chongjin, Kilju and Songjin annihilated enemy stragglers, and before August 15, the day of country’s liberation, put factories under armed control and raided the police establishments.

The Kkachibong Armed Corps organized by Choe Il played a great role in the final operation.

Choe Il had been dispatched to the Hoeryong area in the summer of 1941. O Paek Ryong’s group guided him and assigned him to the area where he would work. He had formed an armed corps with charcoal-burners, evaders of military service and the labour draft, and progressive young people, and was in command of the corps operating from Kkachi Hill in Hoeryong. On the formation of the corps, they had read out their pledge and each of them had sworn an oath. The corps had tentative regulations and rules of conduct.

Choe Il had been in touch with Pak Chang Bom, our political worker who had been conducting activities relying on the temporary secret base on Mt. Kom, Rokya-ri, Kyonghung County.

The Kkachibong Armed Corps started combat actions before the beginning of the decisive battle. And when there were engagements in the northern border area, they attacked the retreating enemy soldiers in Wonjong, Chonghak and Mt. Mayu, and blew up enemy powder magazines and an oil depot. Without waiting for the advance of the Soviet forces, they liberated Hoeryong by their own efforts. The enemy troops they destroyed in the area of Kkachi Hill were quite numerous. They captured planes, anti-aircraft guns and quantities of clothing and equipment.

The resistance organizations in Ryanggang and South Hamgyong

Provinces destroyed many police stations and other organs of enemy rule before the arrival of the Soviet forces.

The resistance organizations in Cholwon and Poptong in Kangwon Province, and in Yomju and Sakju in North Phyongan Province also fought well.

The resistance organizations in Sinuiju, from the day after the order for the general offensive was issued, attacked local police substations and border guard posts, and occupied the provincial police department and provincial office building. They also disarmed enemy stragglers hiding at the airfield, and handed them over to the headquarters of the Soviet forces that arrived there in the latter half of August.

In South Phyongan Province and Pyongyang a large resistance unit centring on the Fatherland Liberation Corps raided an arsenal, occupied the provincial and city office buildings and arrested the defeated enemy soldiers.

The resistance organizations in Hwanghae Province also attacked and contained enemy troops in various locations before the surrender of Japanese imperialism.

What I feel to be regretful whenever I recollect the days of the final campaign is that the main force of the KPRA that had made preparations for the operations for liberating the country for several years at the training base in the Soviet Union failed to carry out operations as had been planned originally.

While commanding our units engaged with the Japanese forces in the northern border area, I was putting finishing touches to the preparations for an airlift to Korea in command of the airborne troops. I partially reorganized the troops in keeping with the situation at the front and had them supplied with new weapons, ammunition and equipment.

However, our airborne troops, who went to the airfield by truck, had to come back, because Japan had surrendered so soon. When Japan's surrender became known to us, we found it difficult to believe for some time. It was beyond our imagination that Japan, the powerful enemy which had been so arrogant, so brutal and so tenacious, hauled down its flag within a week of the war.

But her surrender was a stark reality beyond all doubt.

Japan’s defeat was a wish our forerunners had aspired to even on their deathbeds and the culmination of the resistance our people had put up perseveringly at the cost of blood for many decades while suffering terrible hardships and sacrifices. It opened a bright avenue of revival for our country and nation.

Some people judge Japan’s early surrender to be a product of a conspiracy between the United States and Japan; whatever the inside story, we would have liberated the whole territory of the country if Japan had offered resistance for a few months.

Here is material that deals with the situation created by Japan’s sudden surrender:

“When Japan was gradually following the road of defeat and the Soviet Union was making preparations for attacking Japan with the weaponry of justice, General Kim Il Sung planned to destroy the Kwantung Army by dispatching his elite troops again to Manchuria.

“He deployed his army at all vantage points in Manchuria, and 20 planes were standing ready. This was a part of the plan to rise up in cooperation with the Korean officers and men in the Japanese army who had been mostly drafted. On the eve of executing this epoch-making plan, Japan surrendered and, to the regret of the would-be insurgents, the plan miscarried and was abandoned. Had this plan been set up a little earlier or had Japan surrendered a little later, General Kim Il Sung, by giving full play to his protean strategy and tactics, would have entered Korea in state amid thunderous cheers accompanied by the whirling sound of airplane propellers or by the boom of guns. Not only for General Kim Il Sung but for all the Korean nation this can be called a matter of regret that can never be soothed for thousands of years.” (On Kim Il Sung, an article carried in *Munhwa Joson*, a magazine published in Tokyo, Japan, May Showa 22 (1947).)

I heard that the whole country shed tears of joy on the day Japan’s surrender was announced. I was also told dances were held all day long in front of the Ryongwang and Ulmil Pavilions in Pyongyang. The cheers of joy of the nation shook the whole country, the nation that had put an end to the long, long dark night and stifling slavery 40 years after the loss of its

sovereignty and 36 years after the annexation of its territory.

Even after August 15, 1945, the day when the Japanese Emperor announced the surrender, the Japanese forces continued to offer resistance. That was a product of a conspiracy by the two imperialist powers–the United States and Japan–to prevent Korea from being communized after the war and place an obstacle in the way of the independence of Korea.

On August 16, 1945, the Government-General in Korea and the headquarters of the Korean military district issued the "Outline for Controlling Political Movements" and gave subordinate units in different parts of the country an order to suppress the liberation struggle of the Korean people. Claiming that the Japanese forces in Korea were still in existence, they dared to warn people not to act rashly, as they would resort to arms without hesitation if the Koreans launched any independence movement, taking advantage of Japan's unconditional surrender.

This meant that combat actions did not end in Korea after Japan's declaration of unconditional surrender.

As the Government-General and the Japanese army in Korea were disregarding the declaration of surrender, the resistance forces in Korea showed no mercy in destroying with arms the stragglers of the Japanese army that were putting up resistance and the ruling establishments of the enemy. The resistance organizations and armed corps in Pyongyang and South Phyongan Province wiped out the remnants of the Japanese army and disarmed them before the arrival of the Soviet forces. They then formed Party organizations and local autonomous organs. Popular self-government organs were set up down to the lowest echelon; they assumed the reins of provincial administration and directly dealt with civil administration.

According to available information, the resistance organizations and armed corps in Korea, excluding those in North and South Hamgyong Provinces, raided and destroyed nearly 1,000 organs of rule of the enemy in a week in mid-August.

In this way the liberation of Korea was won through the struggle of the

KPRA, which had struck powerful military blows against Japanese imperialism for 15 years and shaken it to its very foundations, and the general mobilization of the resistance forces involving various strata across the country. The Soviet operations against Japan were able to be concluded in such a short span of time because the long-drawn-out resistance by the army and the people of Korea preceded them.

Korea's liberation was the great result of the struggle of the forces of our people and the KPRA themselves in the favourable circumstances created by the Soviet forces' destruction of the Japanese Kwantung Army. In accordance with the operational plans for the final offensive of the KPRA, the resistance organizations and armed corps we had organized in the homeland in the 1930s and the first half of the 1940s destroyed the aggressor troops and colonial ruling machinery of Japanese imperialism in various parts of the country and liberated their motherland.

Introduced here are materials that clarify that the liberation of Korea was achieved by the force of the Koreans themselves.

Already before August 15, 1945, an American diplomatic document pointed out, "The Korean communist army (Kim Il Sung's army) may sweep over the Korean peninsula at any time."

A university professor of the United States wrote, "Manchuria (Northeast China) is a main theatre of the Pacific War, and resistance by General Kim Il Sung proved a great factor that frustrated the subsequent military expansion of Japan."

On the role the KPRA played in defeating Japanese imperialism and liberating Korea, a book published in the Soviet Union reads, "Korea continued the struggle against the oppressors by its own efforts for 40 years, i.e., from 1905. Until August 1945 guerrilla units were active in Korea, and they rendered positive assistance to the Soviet forces in their campaign against Japan." (R. Malinovsky, *The Kwantung Army Is Defeated,* Kor. ed., p. 311.)

After the defeat of Japan, General Takenato, commander of the Pyongyang garrison of the Japanese army, confessed at his meeting with General Chistyakov, commander of the Soviet 25th Army, that Japan had stationed seven divisions of two corps and a great number of gendarmes and police in Korea in order mainly to repulse the struggle of the Korean guerrillas as well as to get ready for war with the Soviet Union.

Our people have a history of struggle against Japan spanning hundreds of years. Already in the late 16th century, they fought the seven-year-long Imjin Patriotic War against hundreds of thousands of Japanese aggressor forces.

In modern times, the history of anti-Japanese struggle of the Korean nation can be said to cover a period of more than 70 years. When the Japanese ship *Unyo* invaded our country in 1875, the Korean people put up armed resistance. Even though the ruling circles trembled at the strength of the Japanese aggressor forces, the army and the people resolutely fought against them.

In later years, they fought tenaciously for many decades to drive out the foreign forces through violence and nonviolence and through legal, illegal and various other methods such as the movement to "defend justice and wipe out evils"[19], the Righteous Volunteers movement, enlightenment movement and Independence Army movement.

As Mt. Paektu, an ancestral mountain, commands all the mountains in Korea, so the anti-Japanese armed struggle we started and developed in the forests of Mt. Paektu formed the mainstream of our people's struggle for national liberation and social progress.

The liberation of Korea was the sum total of the anti-Japanese armed struggle spanning 20 years and at the same time the conclusion of the heroic nationwide resistance the broad anti-Japanese patriotic forces at home and abroad carried out for many decades at the cost of sweat and blood, and with great sacrifices.

# 8. The Triumphal Return

In August Juche 34 (1945), Korea was aflame with the joy of liberation.

In the wave of excitement that enveloped the whole land of Korea, the people were waiting impatiently for the triumphal return of the national hero General Kim Il Sung.

The ancient city of Pyongyang, where the leader of the nation was born, was astir even at night waiting for the arrival of General Kim Il Sung, who left his home in snowstorm in Juche 14 (1925). When would he come back, tomorrow or the day after tomorrow? The four hundred thousand Pyongyangites were all waiting for him.

In Seoul, Ryo Un Hyong, Ho Hon, Hong Myong Hui and other leading figures of the national liberation struggle organized the preparatory committee to welcome General Kim Il Sung. Every day the Seoul railway station plaza was crowded with tens of thousands of people who were waiting for him.

The hearts of thirty million people were throbbing in expectation of the moment of General Kim Il Sung's triumphal return home.

At the news of Japan's unconditional surrender, the KPRA men at the training base were seized with excitement, preparing to return home. I also wished to return home as soon as possible, for I had lived in foreign lands going through storm and stress for 20 years. But we had to put off our return for some time, repressing the yearning for our motherland and native place.

We knew how eagerly the people in the homeland were waiting for the triumphant return of the KPRA.

However, we did not hurry our departure. We wanted to make better preparations before going to the homeland. We needed to prepare for the building of a new country. Now that we had carried out the strategic task of national liberation, we had to draw up a schedule to hasten the building of a new country.

On September 2, 1945, on board the USS *Missouri*, which was at anchor in Tokyo Bay, an international ceremony was held to legally confirm the unconditional surrender of Japan. That day, on behalf of the Japanese government and military authorities, Foreign Minister Shigemitsu and Chief of Staff of the Japanese army Umez signed the instrument of surrender. When he was Japanese Minister to China, Shigemitsu lost one leg in a grenade attack by Martyr Yun Pong Gil. Umez, too, was a notorious Japanese militarist. He was the Commander of the Kwantung Army from the autumn of 1939 to the summer of 1944. Approximately a dozen persons were in command of the Kwantung Army in succession, and Umez was the last but one. Under his command, the enemy launched a large "punitive" operation against the KPRA under the high-sounding name of "special clean-up campaign for maintaining public peace in the southeastern area".

With Japan's surrender, the Second World War, which had thrown mankind into immeasurable miseries and agony, resulted in the victory of the anti-fascist forces.

When our sworn enemy Umez signed the instrument of surrender and drank the bitter cup of defeat, we were preparing to return home as the heroes who had triumphed in the anti-Japanese revolution and made a new history of national liberation.

The end of the Second World War opened the prospect for different countries in Europe, the cradle of communism, and in Asia, the forefront of the national liberation struggle, to build a new society on a democratic basis.

The situation in the motherland was good.

Immediately after liberation, people's committees were organized in many parts of our country. Party organizations and mass organizations were formed everywhere centring on the revolutionaries who had been involved in the homeland Party organizations and the resistance organization members. Literary men and artists at home and abroad gathered in Pyongyang, Seoul and other major cities, cherishing a new hope for building national culture. Workers formed armed guards and protected factories, enterprises, coal and other mines, ports and railways of their own accord. Our people's enthusiasm

for national salvation, which had been displayed in national resistance, was converted into enthusiasm for nation-building with the liberation.

From the viewpoint of both the immediate task of the Korean revolution and its ultimate objective, the situation was very optimistic.

However, we could not relax in the least.

Though the Japanese imperialists had been defeated, the reactionaries did not give up their offensive against the revolution. Even after the Japanese Emperor had declared an unconditional surrender, the remnants of the defeated Japanese army continued their resistance.

Pro-Japanese elements, traitors to the nation and the representatives of the exploiting class were hatching a plot underground to disturb the building of a new country. Traitors to the revolution, heterogeneous elements and men of political ambition concealed their true colours and infiltrated Party organizations and people's government organs.

When we were in the Soviet Far East region, we heard the news that the US army would be stationed in Korea south of the $38^{th}$ parallel. This meant that the troops of two big powers would be stationed in our country at the same time. It was a bad omen that the armies of two countries would be stationed in our country, which was not a defeated nation, no matter what excuse they might make or how they might justify it.

During the peasant war of 1894[20], Japan and China dispatched their armies to Korea. But the Korean people did not benefit at all from them. The dispatch of the two armies culminated in the Sino-Japanese War that devastated our country.

The stationing of the Soviet and US armies might turn our country into an arena of confrontation between socialism and capitalism, and our national force was liable to be split into left and right, patriots and traitors to the nation. If factional strife prevailed and factions conspired with foreign forces it would end up in the ruin of the country.

In these circumstances, we had to strengthen the motive force of our revolution in every way in order to defend the independence of our nation and speed up the building of a new country.

By the motive force of our revolution I mean the force of our own people.

Since the first day we set out on the road of revolution, we made every effort to educate, organize and mobilize the people who were to undertake the anti-Japanese revolution. Millions of people in the ranks of resistance who took part in the final battle for national liberation were not people who turned out spontaneously to the battlefield but the organized masses whose forces we had built up for many years.

We never hesitated to walk a hundred miles to win over a man for the revolution. We became human bombs and plunged even into the heart of the fire to protect the people.

The whole process of the anti-Japanese revolution was a history of love and trust with which we held up the people as the makers of history, awakened them to political awareness and organized them to stand in the forefront of the liberation war. It was also a history of struggle and creation, in which the people demonstrated themselves as the dignified makers of history, shedding their blood and sweat. These people and the fighters of the People's Revolutionary Army were the motive force of our revolution that would build a new country. In the crucible of the anti-Japanese revolution we found a valuable truth that when we believe in the strength of the people and fight relying on them, enjoying their love and support, we can overcome any trial whatever and emerge victorious in any adversity.

After liberation, some people said that liberating the country was difficult, but building a society after liberation would not be very difficult. But I considered that nation-building was indeed a difficult and complicated undertaking.

Just as our people had carried out the anti-Japanese revolution by their own struggle, so they had to build a new country by their own efforts. We resolved to build the Party, state and armed forces, and also the national economy, education and culture, and develop science and technology by relying on our people's strength. In order to rouse the people to build a new country, we needed the staff of the revolution and state power which would educate, organize and mobilize them, as well as an army which could protect the building of a new society with arms.

With this in mind, I convened a meeting of military and political cadres of

the KPRA at the training base on August 20, 1945 and set forth the three major tasks of building the Party, the state and the armed forces–new strategic tasks for strengthening the motive force of our revolution.

We discussed the specific ways and methods for carrying out these tasks, and made necessary arrangements. We formed small teams for implementing these tasks and designated the places where they would be sent. We decided to dispatch Kang Kon, Pak Rak Kwon, Choe Kwang, Im Chol, Kim Man Ik and Kong Jong Su to Northeast China.

Before leaving for the homeland, we gave small-team members a short course for several days. The short course dealt with the content and method of work to be done at their destinations, local customs and various other matters. Kim Chaek, An Kil and I gave the lectures.

After the short course, my comrades wanted to leave for the homeland at once. At that time they all yearned for the homeland like children.

When we were leaving for the homeland we left the women soldiers with babies behind at the training base, planning to bring them home later.

When returning home, the KPRA units took different routes, because the Japanese imperialists had surrendered suddenly when each of them was fighting in different areas in accordance with the plans of joint operation with the Soviet army.

The unit which was waiting at the training base for parachute operations to be carried out in different places in Korea had a plan to come back to the homeland by way of Khabarovsk, Mudanjiang, Wangqing and Tumen. But an unexpected incident made us give up the plan on the way and change the route, so we had to return home by ship. The remnants of the defeated Kwantung Army had blown up a railway tunnel south of Mudanjiang, and destroyed a bridge and the runway of the Mudanjiang airfield. We were not in a position to use motor vehicles, trains or airplanes. We went as far as Mudanjiang and then returned to the Soviet Far East region. In Vladivostok we boarded a warship and left for the homeland.

A colonel of the 1st Far East Front Headquarters accompanied me as an escort.

The captain assured me that the ship would arrive in Wonsan Port within a day and a night even at medium speed.

When we left Vladivostok the sea was rough. Waves as large as apartment blocks rose along both sides of the ship and broke over the deck. It was an amazing sight.

Most of us were strangers to the sea and suffered a lot from seasickness.

Our party slept one night on the ship. The next day the sea was calm.

It is still fresh in my memory that my heart throbbed strangely when I gazed at the boundless ocean over the side of the ship. I remembered the day when I was crossing the Amnok River at the age of 13. It seemed to me that the Amnok and innumerable other rivers of the homeland frozen by the sorrow of the ruined nation were being melted by the hot wind of liberation into this vast expanse of water.

As I was returning home after 20 years, leaving my blood relations, friends and comrades buried in a foreign land, I was overcome with mixed emotions of joy and sorrow, which were beyond words.

We arrived at Wonsan on September 19, 1945.

The members of the headquarters of a Soviet army unit stationed in Wonsan greeted us at the port.

Among the Koreans who came to the port that day, I remember Han Il Mu, who was an officer in the Soviet army. Later, he worked as the Chairman of the Kangwon Provincial Party Committee.

Because the Soviet army had kept our coming a secret, there was no crowd of people at the port to greet us.

Ho Hon, Hong Myong Hui, Ryo Un Hyong and other renowned figures in the homeland who were taking the lead in waiting for our return later learned that there had been no welcome upon our landing at Wonsan. They said with regret that we should have announced our return in advance, lest the people should feel ashamed of not having greeted us. Ri Ju Ha from the Wonsan City Party Committee, too, expressed a similar regret. Ho Hon said that if the date of our return had been known to the public in advance, the majority of Seoul citizens, to say nothing of

the people who were waiting for us every day at the Seoul railway station, would have thronged to Wonsan on foot or by train.

However, we did not wish for such a grand welcome. Our fighters never expected recompense for the sweat and blood they had shed on the battlefield and gallows during the many years of struggle for national liberation.

At that time we were determined to go among the people quietly on our return without spreading the news of our arrival and lay the foundation for building the Party, state and army. I intended to offer the greetings of our return to the people in the homeland after laying this foundation.

Through our talks with Kangwon provincial Party officials after our arrival at Wonsan, I felt keenly once more that we should go among the people as soon as possible.

On the very day we landed at Wonsan I had talks with many people. I had talks with Party officials on the Wonsan City Party Committee, and in the Tongyang Hotel with the representatives of trade unions and local civic-minded persons. I spent much time talking with Ri Ju Ha.

After these talks I reached the conclusion that none of the parties and organizations in the homeland had shown the people a correct line for nation-building.

Some officials of the Wonsan City Party Committee admired the Soviet model. When the path Korea was to take became the topic of conversation, they asserted that we should carry out socialist revolution at once. This idea was reflected in the motto hanging on the wall of the city Party committee headquarters: “Proletariat, unite under the banner of communism!”

I asked them if they were trying to build a new country only by the efforts of the working class. They replied that they were people fighting for the communist revolution, so they trusted only the working class.

Their idea was quite similar to that of the earlier communists whom I had met frequently in the latter half of the 1920s. I felt depressed when I heard such assertions again in the liberated homeland 20 years later.

I could not find any trace of progress or sincere efforts to keep pace with the trend of the new era in their political ideas and doctrines.

I told the officials of the Wonsan City Party Committee: "The motto 'Proletariat, unite under the banner of communism!' does not conform with the reality of our country whose immediate task is the anti-imperialist, anti-feudal democratic revolution, so it must be changed to the motto, 'Unite under the banner of democracy!' In order to build a democratic society which guarantees freedom and rights for the people in the liberated homeland, we must rally not only the working class and peasants but also all patriotic people from all walks of life who are interested in the building of a new society, behind the united front. We should mobilize such nationwide efforts to build a prosperous, independent state."

I talked with them before and after dinner. They kept me there for a long time, asking questions continually.

Kim Ik Hyon, who accompanied me to the city Party committee together with So Chol, came to me and said that it was midnight. He asked me if I was going to sit up all night working for the liberated homeland as I had done in the mountains.

I told Kim Ik Hyon that he should remember that this was a new line of departure, even though the country had been liberated.

A talk with the officials of the Wonsan City Party Committee was the first opportunity I had on my return to the homeland to outline the nation-building policy in line with the Ten-Point Programme of the ARF. That day I made public my view that our country should be a democratic people's republic.

The interviews with Ri Ju Ha and other Party workers and influential people in Wonsan convinced me that it was absolutely correct that we had defined immediately after the August 15 liberation the building of the Party, state and army as the tasks of nation-building and had decided to dispatch the operatives to their destinations on our arrival in the homeland.

In Wonsan, we sent without delay some of the small teams who were to work in North and South Hamgyong Provinces to their destinations by northward train. The same day, the comrades who were to work in the Cholwon area left for their destination by southward train.

I myself did not feel at ease, as I was sending them away on further

missions without giving them a single day's respite from the exhausting struggle they had continued through atrocious conditions and hardships for many years, dedicating all their youth to the revolution.

Moreover, the day we landed at Wonsan was the eve of the Harvest Moon Festival. I wanted to allow them to relax and enjoy the festival before departure, but the pressing situation at home did not permit it. The team which left for North and South Hamgyong Provinces spent the Harvest Moon day on the train. The train was crowded with passengers who were going to visit their ancestors' graves, I was told.

Kim Chaek, An Kil, Choe Chun Guk, Ryu Kyong Su and Jo Jong Chol were among the team. They were very sorry to say good-bye to me.

I also felt sorry to see Choe Chun Guk and Jo Jong Chol, who had received serious wounds in the war against the Japanese, limping up the carriage steps, helping each other, and waving to me. How many battlegrounds and thorny bushes they had trekked through with those legs that had undergone operations without getting even a drop of anaesthetic!

They naturally had the right to relieve their fatigue accumulated on the anti-Japanese battlefields, enjoying privilege as wounded soldiers for a few years in the liberated homeland.

However, they left for their destinations in the north with smiles on their faces, having no time to relieve their fatigue.

We had to cross many new peaks and passes to build a prosperous independent state. On that path they had to shed a lot of blood and sweat. The great war against the Japanese had been an untrodden path, and so was the building of a new country. Had it not been an untrodden path, a thorny path, replete with difficulties and trials, we would not have made such haste.

I urged Kim Chaek to pay a visit to his hometown when he had the time. I said the same to Choe Chun Guk, Ryu Kyong Su, Jo Jong Chol and Ri Ul Sol. They were all from North or South Hamgyong Provinces.

But they never visited their native places till they were called back to Pyongyang, not because they did not love their hometowns, but because they had a strong sense of mission and responsibility. You comrades composed a

song about the fork in the road to Mangyongdae, saying that when I was going to the Kangson Steel Works I did not drop in at my old home. In fact, all the anti-Japanese revolutionary veterans worked hard to lay the foundation of the Party, state and army, without visiting their native homes after their return to the homeland.

Our veterans thought that they had no right to do so before carrying out the orders and instructions of their commander.

In this way, we went among the people from the day we set foot again in the homeland. Our fighters had not a moment to untie their shoelaces fastened on Mt. Paektu before leaving for the new front, one after another. Everyone regarded his or her workplace as a new theatre of operations. We can say that our triumphal return was rather a strategic movement to open a new chapter in the revolution than merely a homecoming.

On September 20, 1945, I left Wonsan by train for Pyongyang, together with my comrades who were to work in the west coast area.

The representative of the Soviet army headquarters in north Korea came down as far as Puraesan station from Pyongyang to meet us. He grasped my hands warmly, congratulating me on my return home.

My company arrived in Pyongyang on the morning of September 22.

The women guerrillas who had been left at the training base came to the homeland via Sonbong, North Hamgyong Province, towards the end of November that year. As soon as she arrived in Chongjin, Kim Jong Suk reported their arrival to me by phone. With the help of An Kil, Choe Chun Guk, Pak Yong Sun and others who were working in Chongjin, the women guerrillas worked hard, doing political work among the masses to carry out the tasks of building the Party, state and army.

While staying in Chongjin, Kim Jong Suk toured the Chongjin Iron Works, the Komusan Cement Factory, the Puryong Metallurgical Works, and many other factories and enterprises as well as educational and cultural institutions, and conducted political work among people of all walks of life. She met many people, including workers, peasants, office workers, housewives, senior officials of the Party, government and

working people's organizations, and even middle school pupils.

I was told that the citizens of Chongjin warmly welcomed Kim Jong Suk at that time. The newspaper *Saegil Sinmun* highlighted her revolutionary activities under the title *Half of the Career of Mrs. Kim*.

Her experience in the northern city was so impressive that she talked only about Chongjin for some time after her return to Pyongyang. She talked frequently about how she had had a photo taken with secondary schoolchildren and about the warm hospitality accorded to her and her group by the people of the Rajin noodle house who gave a luncheon in their honour.

Young Kim Jong Il, too, returned home with the women guerrillas.

On the day I entered Pyongyang, together with my comrades-in-arms, I set about carrying out the tasks of building the Party, state and army. That was one of the busiest days after liberation.

In the homeland, too, I worked mainly among the people, among the masses. While visiting factories, rural communities and streets to meet people on the one hand, on the other I met various visitors from home and abroad in my office and lodgings, sharing bed and board with my comrades as I had done on Mt. Paektu.

Whenever they saw me, my comrades advised me to visit my grandparents at home saying that it was my moral obligation to do so. As they were unable to persuade me, Rim Chun Chu visited Mangyongdae in secret, acting as if he had dropped in by chance, and inquired after my family members. I later heard from him about my family in detail.

I did not know how the secret leaked out, but towards the end of September a rumour spread all over the city that I was in Pyongyang. Hearing it, Uncle Hyong Rok went to the South Phyongan Provincial Party Committee and asked them to help him to see me.

Rim Chun Chu asked my uncle to tell him all that he knew about me.

Hyong Rok replied, "The real name of my nephew is Kim Song Ju. In his boyhood in Mangyongdae he was also called Jung Son. His face dimples when he smiles."

That evening Rim brought Uncle Hyong Rok to my lodgings.

When he met me, he said, “How much hardship you’ve gone through!” and then he was choked with tears. Apparently he felt a lump in his throat remembering the days when he was pining for his blood relatives who had been left in an alien land as dead souls, experiencing all kinds of bitterness for 20 years. It is hard to describe the trouble he suffered.

“Until you liberated the country and came back, I looked after our home, so I failed to visit the grave of my brother and his wife. Why did they have to die so young?”

He gazed into my face. “Your handsome face has become weather-beaten. The wind must be very rough on Mt. Paektu.” He looked sad.

But my uncle’s face was more ravaged than mine. While looking at him, who was twice as old as he had been 20 years before, tears formed in my eyes. His face was full of wrinkles, and I thought of how many trials every wrinkle represented.

“If Mt. Paektu were near, I would have made even straw sandals to support your army, but I couldn’t give you any help.”

“You looked after our home, Uncle,” I replied, moved by his humble words.

Uncle Hyong Rok and I shared our experiences all through the night. The next day I sent him back to Mangyongdae. I asked him to keep our meeting to himself, and he agreed. However, he told my grandfather secretly that Song Ju was in Pyongyang.

My grandfather said with joy: “That’s what ought to be. Our Song Ju cannot change even if Mt. Paektu changes. Some people say that Kim Il Sung is from Jolla Province and others say that he is from Hamgyong Province. Can there be so many Kim Il Sung’s in Korea?”

After visiting the Kangson Steel Works on October 9 and founding the Communist Party of North Korea, I gave my first address to the people in the homeland at the Pyongyang City mass rally to welcome me.

The fact is that I had never intended to meet the people at a grand welcoming rally. But the important persons in the homeland and my comrades-in-arms insisted on holding such a grand ceremony.

On the day when I first revealed my real name to the public at a meeting,

instead of my assumed name, Kim Yong Hwan, someone proposed to hold a national mass rally to welcome my triumphal return. The whole meeting hailed the proposal.

Preparations for the welcoming ceremony had been under way behind the scenes, under the sponsorship of the South Phyongan Provincial Party Committee and People's Political Committee. On the eve of the ceremony, a pine arch and makeshift stage were erected in the public playground at the foot of Moran Hill.

I had told Kim Yong Bom not to arrange a grand ceremony. But the people of the South Phyongan Provincial Party Committee were so stubborn, that they put up posters in every street and lane announcing that we had entered Pyongyang and I would meet the people in the public stadium on October 14.

About noon on October 14, 1945 I went by car to the Pyongyang public playground, the venue of the ceremony. I was amazed at the sight of the surging crowds filling the squares and streets. The playground, too, was already full of people. There were even people in the trees around the playground, and the Choesung Pavilion and the Ulmil Pavilion were covered with people. Going through the waves of welcome I raised my hand in acknowledgement of the cheering crowds.

General Chistyakov, commander of the Soviet 25th Army, and Major General Rebezev were present at the mass rally.

Many people made speeches that day.

Jo Man Sik took the floor. I still remember a passage of his speech which triggered laughter among the audience. He said in a merry voice that at the news of liberation he pinched himself to see if he was not dreaming and he felt pain. He even showed how he had pinched his arm.

When I mounted the platform the shout "Long live the independence of Korea!" and the cheers of the crowd reached a climax.

As I listened to their cheers, I felt the fatigue that had accumulated for 20 years melting away. The cheers of the people became a hot wind and warmed my body and mind.

Standing on the platform amidst the enthusiastic cheers of more than 100,000 people, I felt happiness that defied description by any flowery language. If anyone asked me about the happiest moment in my life, I would reply that it was that moment. It was happiness emanating from the pride that I had fought for the people as a son of the people, from the feeling that the people loved and trusted me and from the fact that I was in the embrace of the people.

It may be said that the cheers of the people resounding in the Pyongyang public playground on October 14, 1945 were the acknowledgement of and reward for the arduous struggle we had waged for the first half of our lifetimes for our country and fellow countrymen. I accepted this reward as the people's love for and trust in me. As I always say, no pleasure can be greater than that of enjoying the love and support of the people.

I have regarded the love and support of the people as the absolute standard that measures the value of existence of a revolutionary and the happiness he can enjoy. Apart from the love and support of the people, a revolutionary has nothing.

Bourgeois politicians try to lure the people with money, but we obtained trust from the people at the cost of our blood and sweat. I was moved by the people's trust in me and I considered it the greatest pleasure I could enjoy in my life.

The gist of my speech that day was great national unity. I appealed to the whole nation to build a prosperous independent state in Korea, united as one–those with strength dedicating strength, those with knowledge devoting knowledge and those with money offering money.

The crowd expressed their support with thunderous applause and cheers.

The *Pyongyang Minbo*, a newspaper of those days, wrote about the sight of the Pyongyang public playground on that day under the title *Cheers of 400,000 People Shake Korea, A Lovely Land.*

"Pyongyang has a long history of 4,000 years and a large population of 400,000. Has it ever had such a large meeting as this? Has it ever held such an important meeting? ...

"What gave historic significance to this meeting and turned it into a storm of emotion, was that General Kim Il Sung, the great patriot of Korea and a hero whom Pyongyang produced, was present in person there, and extended joyful and warm greetings and words of encouragement to the people. ... as soon as General Kim Il Sung appeared on the platform, the hero whom the Korean people hold in high respect and have been looking forward to seeing, a storm of enthusiastic cheers arose, and most of the audience were deeply moved to silent tears. ... as he touched the hearts of the masses with steely force their thunderous cheers seemed to voice their determination to fight to the death together with this man."

We can say that the mass rally was the start of a great march of our people towards building a new country.

That day at the meeting place I met my aunt, Hyon Yang Sin, and my maternal uncle, Kang Yong Sok, when the ceremony was over.

When I look back upon the moment when I met my aunt after descending from the platform, tears still well up in my eyes.

I did not know how the old woman forced her way through the jostling crowds, but she was in my car shedding tears. I was told later that Ju To Il had seen her squeezing her way with gritted teeth towards the platform and brought her to the car.

She grasped my hands and said with deep emotion: "Nephew, how many years has it been?"

"Aunt, you have had so much trouble looking after a large family alone!" I said in greeting.

"You suffered more in the mountains. Living in a comfortable room in all seasons, as I do, is no suffering. I was anxious while coming to the playground. Though your uncle said you had come, what if you had turned out to be Kim Il Sung from Jolla Province? How glad I was to find you, my nephew, on the platform!" She said in excitement and in tears at the same time.

Watching our reunion, my comrades-in-arms were also moved to tears.

"Aunt, why are you crying when the whole city is laughing and dancing with delight?"

"You remind me of your father and mother. If they were alive and could have heard your speech today, how happy they would be!"

"Auntie, from today you shall take the place of my mother."

When I said this, she threw herself into my arms and burst into tears. I knew well that she was crying at the thought of my mother. My mother and aunt were more intimate than real sisters. My aunt married into my family at the age of 15. She did not feel at home in so poor a family at first, but she became fond of our family through basking in my mother's love.

My mother had loved my aunt very much. They had worked together in the fields, too. At break times my mother would often let her snatch a wink of sleep with her head on her own lap because my aunt always felt tired from want of sleep. And when she fell asleep, my mother combed her hair calmly. Since she began her life in our family enjoying such affection, my aunt could not forget my mother. She regretted very much that she had failed to go to Antu to pray for the soul of my mother when she died.

"Even a hundred aunts cannot replace your mother. It seems that her soul has come flying to this playground and is staying with us." She dried her tears with the sleeves of her jacket. Laughing and crying by turns she told about her quarrel with her husband: "That tricky old man came to the city and met you, nephew, without my knowledge. He kept it to himself until yesterday. So I protested, 'Old man, is Kim Il Sung only your nephew, and not mine?' He replied absurdly that an arm bends inwardly, not outwardly."

In the afternoon, I went to Mangyongdae with my uncle and aunt. We did not take the road which we use nowadays, but drove to the ferry on the Sunhwa River and went to Mangyongdae by boat. Along the muddy lane to the landing place were stepping stones to be used when getting on board. This was where I used to catch crabs with my trousers rolled up to my knees in my childhood.

The sound of a washerwoman's club and the smell of young pine trees on Mangyong Hill which greeted me that day are still fresh in my memory. That sound was so melodious and that smell was so fragrant. When a cow mooed on the Kalmaeji Plain, I felt a lump in my throat at the sight of my native

place, something which I experienced for the first time in many years.

I was now 33 years old, though it seemed only yesterday that in my boyhood I used to remain awake all night thinking of my father in prison. It was just like the people in the old days said: Pitiless time was flying by.

The 40 years it took to win back the lost country and the 20 years it took me to regain my native home seemed too long.

That the sovereignty of a nation lost in a moment could only be recovered in a thousand years was an important lesson I had learned during the 20 years of the revolution against the Japanese. I mean that it is easy to lose a country, but difficult to win it back. It is a grim reality of the world that it takes decades or even centuries to restore a country which was lost in an instant.

It is well known that India won its independence from England after 200 years of colonial enslavement. The Philippines and Indonesia won their independence after 300 years, Algeria after 130 years, Sri Lanka after 150 years and Vietnam after nearly 100 years. How expensive the cost of national ruin is!

That is why I frequently tell the young people that a ruined nation is as good as dead, that if they do not want to be a stateless people, they must go all out to defend the country, and that in order not to end up as slaves they must make the country more prosperous and collect even one more piece of rubble to build the defences higher.

Of the scenes of the day when I was visiting my old home one is particularly fresh in my memory. A child of only two or three years old waved to our group. There was nothing special about this scene, but it had an impact on my heart. I felt as if I were seeing the symbol of a new Korea in the appearance of the child, who was waving his hands free from care in his cosy native village, in the centre of a peaceful world.

When I was entering the yard of my old home behind my aunt, my heart beat wildly. The yard which had looked as wide as a city square 20 years before seemed no bigger than the palm of my hand at that time. However, as I thought that it was the terminus of 20 years of an arduous, long-drawn-out march, I felt as if I had landed after crossing a great ocean.

As I caught sight of the familiar eaves of my old home, I had hallucinations that my father and mother who used to sing *Lullaby* to me and breathe upon my frozen hands, my parents who were buried in their graves like fallen blossoms, revived in old images, were running towards me shouting “Song Ju” and embracing me in their broad arms. I could not step inside easily.

My grandfather came out into the courtyard barefoot and hugged me. “My eldest grandson has come home. ... let me look! ... let me look. ...” He kept repeating these words in tears. My grandmother, too, burst into tears, saying, “Why have you come alone? Where have you left your father and mother?”

I offered to my grandfather and grandmother some wine I had brought from Pyongyang, saying, “Grandfather, grandmother, I am so sorry that I neglected my filial duty until I passed the age of 30.”

“Not at all. You accomplished the cause of independence which your father left unfinished. Nothing could be a greater filial service than that. If you take good care of the country and people, you will be fulfilling your duty to your parents,” my grandfather replied and emptied his cup light-heartedly. With a smile on his face he said that the wine tasted good that day. But his hands trembled a little. Grandmother, too, emptied her cup without difficulty.

However, I was sorry for not having fulfilled my duty to the grandparents. The thought that I had troubled them too much sank deep into my mind. I was grateful to my grandfather when he said that taking care of the country and people was the greatest filial service.

That day all the people of Nam-ri gathered in my house. At the news of my return home, the people came in groups from Tudan-ri and Chuja Island. My childhood friends, too, called on me one after another with bundles of food.

A simple family party turned into a grand banquet. Many people sang and danced in honour of my return. Old man Choe who had owed much to our family from the days of my great-grandfather Kim Ung U danced to the tune of *Kkungniri*. Aunt, too, sang *Lullaby* my father had composed.

That night I slept in my home for the first time in 20 years.

At that time the under-floor heating was under repair and the door was not yet fitted. We covered the half-dry floor with wheat and rice straw and spread a straw-mat over it to sleep on.

My grandfather urged me to sleep in the house of a neighbour. But I said, "We did not enjoy any comforts in the mountains. We slept in the open, regarding the sky as our roof and the grass and trees as our coverlet. Why should I sleep at the neighbour's now that I have come to my own home? I will sleep in my house."

My grandfather agreed, and with a beaming smile said that it would indeed be awkward if I slept at a neighbour's house instead of in my own home, after 20 years' absence.

Grandmother spread a cotton quilt on the straw-mat, a quilt that had been made of the cotton yarn she herself had spun so long ago.

At midnight, she put her arm under my pillow and asked calmly, "Did you get married in the mountains? Did your wife, too, fight in the mountains?"

"Yes, she was a guerrilla."

"Does your son take after you?"

"People say so."

"That's good."

She asked many other things. Afraid that the weight of my head would hurt her arm, I asked her if my head was heavy. She replied that it was not heavy, and thrust her arm further under my neck. When she did this for her grandson of over thirty, as she had done in my boyhood, her love warmed my heart.

"You had better move the graves of your father and mother from Manchuria to the liberated homeland," she said.

That was the last topic she brought up that night. It was her natural concern. I fully understood how much she wanted to bring home the remains of her children who were buried in an alien land.

"Grandmother," I said, "moving the graves of my parents is important,

but I would like first to seek out some people to whom I owe much. Mr. Hwang and old man Kim on the Kaduk Pass from Jonju who helped my father escape at the Yonphori Inn. Also an old man called Jo who saved me from the jaws of death when I had a bad chill. I must find them first and then transfer the graves of my parents."

"That's a good idea. If you do that, your father buried in Yangdicun will be delighted."

I told my grandmother through the night about my benefactors, comrades-in-arms and friends who helped me in the days in Jilin and Jiandao, and on Mt. Paektu. I shed silent tears recalling my father and mother, Uncle Hyong Gwon and my younger brother Chol Ju, who were lying in graves far away from home. Grandmother, too, sobbed quietly.

Then she stopped crying and comforted me, caressing my arms.

"Your father and mother are gone, but Jong Suk has come into our family. And Jong Il was born to carry on the family line."

Looking back upon our traces on Mt. Paektu and the snow-covered plains of Manchuria, I imagined the faces of my comrades-in-arms who were not able to come back with me. I thought about the people to whom I owed much, recalled my childhood and planned the future of the country.

That night at Mangyongdae, which I spent in the liberated homeland after 20 years' absence, was a peaceful night indeed. Two months after the end of the Second World War and the liberation of the country, the 30 million Korean people were still intoxicated with the joy of liberation.

None of these people, however, imagined that the liberation of the country would end in a territorial division and national split, resulting in a great national disaster lasting over half a century.

# N O T E S

1. **The September 18 incident**–Invasion of Northeast China by the Japanese imperialists on September 18, 1931, also called the Manchuria incident. p. 16

2. **The July 7 incident**–The Japanese aggressors surprised a Chinese army unit stationed at Lugouqiao (name of a bridge and a small town near Beijing) on the night of July 7, 1937 to provoke a war in an attempt to occupy the whole of China. The war lasted until 1945. The invasion is also called the Marco Polo Bridge incident or North China incident. p. 16

3. **The *Lullaby***–Kim Hyong Jik, the leader of the anti-Japanese national liberation movement in Korea, composed the *Lullaby* to bring up his son, Comrade Kim Il Sung, into a patriot and national hero. He and his wife Kang Pan Sok often sang this song for their infant son.

**Lullaby**

1. My baby, sleep, sleep, go to sleep quickly.
My baby, sleep, sleep, you are sound asleep.
Be friendly to your kith and kin, dutiful to your parents.
Lovable jewel in my hand, sleep well.

2. My baby, sleep, sleep and grow up to go to school,
My boy, sleep, sleep and go through to university.
Be a doctor and a hero of your motherland,
And bring liberation to the motherland. p. 30

4. **The *Song of the Amnok River*–**A revolutionary song which was composed immediately after the March First Uprising (1919), reflecting the patriotic feelings of the Korean people who had been robbed of their country by the Japanese imperialists. It is also called the *Song of the River Crossing*.

Comrade Kim Il Sung sang this song when crossing the Amnok River nursing the ambition to liberate the country at the age of 13.

**Song of the Amnok River**

1. On the first day of March, nineteen nineteen
I crossed the Amnok River.
This day will come round every year, but
I'll return home only after achieving my ambition.

2. Blue waves of the Amnok River, my motherland,
When shall I be able to return home?
I'll return home after winning back my motherland,
A goal that must be realized at any cost. p. 30

5. **The *Song of Korea*–**A revolutionary song composed by Comrade Kim Il Sung in the early years of his revolutionary struggle against the Japanese.

**Song of Korea**

1. The morning sun is beautiful
So our name is the land of the bright morning sun.
Can there be as beautiful a country in the world
As my precious and beautiful land?

2. My country is full of silver and gold
And is proud of a history of five thousand years.

Let us drive out the wicked Japanese
And ring the bell of liberation loudly.

3. Let us build our state on this free land,
Where there are neither Japanese nor landowners.
Let us brighten our country by our efforts,
The land where our resourceful people live. p. 30

6. ***Conjuring Up the Spirit of Paebaengi***–A satirical Korean folk play in which a single actor recites narratives, sings and dances. p. 32

7. **The anti-"Minsaengdan" struggle**–The struggle against the "Minsaengdan", a counterrevolutionary spy organization formed by the Japanese imperialists in Jiandao, China, in February 1932 in order to undermine the revolutionary struggle of the Korean people. The reactionary nature of the "Minsaengdan" was exposed and the organization was dissolved in April 1932. But the Japanese imperialists clamoured as if the organization had struck deep roots in the revolutionary ranks. "Left" opportunists and factionalist sycophants, who had been fooled by the Japanese scheme, carried out the anti-"Minsaengdan" struggle in an ultra-Leftist way, slandering and killing Koreans on unfounded charges of involvement in the "Minsaengdan". In consequence, a large number of stalwart revolutionaries were murdered, and an atmosphere of unrest and terror was created in the revolutionary ranks. The incident did immeasurable damage to the unity of the revolutionary ranks and the development of the Korean revolution. The "Leftist" deviation in the anti-"Minsaengdan" struggle was eliminated by Comrade Kim Il Sung's principled struggle. p. 39

8. **The Yaoyinggou conference**–A meeting of military and political cadres of the Korean People's Revolutionary Army held at Yaoyinggou, Wangqing County, China, from March 21 to 27, Juche 24 (1935). At this meeting, Comrade Kim Il Sung clarified the problem of overcoming the "Leftist" error in the struggle against the "Minsaengdan", and advanced the policy of dissolving the guerrilla zones and carrying out guerrilla warfare

by moving over wide areas as well as the task of implementing the policy. p. 39

9. **The Zhanggufeng incident**–An incident in which the Japanese imperialist aggressors invaded the area around Lake Khasan during the period from July 29 to August 10, 1938 to test the defence capability of the Soviet Union and occupy Zhanggufeng west of the lake in order to build a base from which to invade the Soviet Far East region. It is also called the Lake Khasan incident. p. 42

10. **The Khalkhin-Gol incident**–An incident in which the Japanese imperialist aggressors invaded the Khalkhin-Gol area of the Mongolian People's Republic on May 28, 1939 in order to occupy the eastern salient of Mongolia and push into the Soviet Union to sever the Trans-Siberian Railway line and occupy the Soviet Far East region. It is also called the Nomonhan incident. p. 43

11. **The conference at Dahuangwai**–A meeting of Party and Young Communist League cadres held at Dahuangwai, Wangqing County, China, from February 24 to March 3, 1935. The meeting discussed the question of overcoming the deviation caused by the "Left" opportunists and factionalist sycophants who had created a grave crisis in the development of the Korean revolution by conducting the anti-"Minsaengdan" struggle in an ultra-Leftist manner and executing Koreans at random, suspecting them of involvement in the "Minsaengdan". It also discussed the question of observing the principle of promoting cadres mainly by the criterion of their loyalty to the revolution and qualifications so as to strengthen the militant unity of the Korean and Chinese peoples, and strengthen the joint anti-Japanese struggle. The question of the slogan of national liberation raised by the Korean communists was also debated. The meeting took appropriate measures. p. 70

12. **The Battle of Qingshanli**–A battle in which the Korean Independence Army, which was operating in Jiandao, destroyed a large force of Japanese imperialist aggressor troops in Qingshanli, Helong County, Jilin Province, China, in October 1920. p. 108

13. **The Tuesday group**–Early Korean communists organized a New Thought Study Society in May 1923 and renamed it the Tuesday Society in November 1924 after Marx's birthday, which happened to be Tuesday. It came to be called the Tuesday group when several factions appeared in the Korean Communist Party, founded in 1925. This group split the working-class movement and mass movement in the 1920s, and, given to factional strife, contributed to the destruction of the Korean Communist Party (disbanded in 1928). After the liberation of the country on August 15, 1945, it destroyed the Party organizations in south Korea and led the people's revolutionary struggle astray. Worming its way into the north of Korea, it worked to destroy the Workers' Party of Korea. During the Fatherland Liberation War, it hatched a plot to overthrow the Party and government. The faction was purged at the Fifth Plenary Meeting of the Central Committee of the Workers' Party of Korea, held in December 1952. p. 109

14. **The M-L group**–The name of this group originated from the Leninist League, a faction formed in the mid-1920s. The work of the M-L group and other factionalists resulted in the dissolution of the Korean Communist Party (founded in 1925) three years after its foundation. Their factional strife continued even after the dissolution of the Party. In the years after the liberation of Korea on August 15, 1945, the M-L group worked to destroy Party organizations and sabotage the mass movement in south Korea. In the years of the Fatherland Liberation War and in the postwar years, it hatched a plot to overthrow the Workers' Party of Korea and the Government of the Republic in conspiracy with the enemy. This faction was purged at the August 1956 Plenary Meeting of the Central Committee of the Workers' Party of Korea. p. 109

15. **The *Three Warring Kingdoms***–A Chinese novel that deals with the military and political conflicts among the local feudal forces of three kingdoms, Wei, Wu and Shu, over the approximately one century (184-280), off their co-existence. p. 236

16. **Jo Ki Chon** (November 6, 1913-July 31, 1951)–He was born in Hoeryong, North Hamgyong Province. After Japan's occupation of Korea, he followed his parents to Siberia, where he spent his childhood. After graduation from Gorky Normal College in Omsk, he taught at the Korean Normal College in Central Asia for about two years.

Around this time, he began to compose poems. With the liberation of Korea, he returned home and created many poems describing the struggle of the people who were building a new country and of the soldiers of the Korean People's Army during the Fatherland Liberation War. Representative of his works is *Mt. Paektu*, an epic, that describes the Battle of Pochonbo, an important event in the revolutionary history of Comrade Kim Il Sung. He worked as Vice-Chairman of the Central Committee of the General Federation of the Unions of Literature and Arts of Korea from March 1951. He died in an air-raid perpetrated by the US imperialists during the war. p. 253

17. **Jong Kwan Chol** (November 1916-December 1983)–A painter hailing from Pyongyang. He was Chairman of the Central Committee of the Korean Artists Union from 1949 to the last moment of his life. He produced a large number of pictures of various themes, among them *Torchlight of Pochonbo*, which describes the Battle of Pochonbo which was organized and commanded by Comrade Kim Il Sung during the anti-Japanese armed struggle, and *Steel Makers*. p. 253

18. **KAPF**–An organization formed by progressive writers and artists in 1925. It was dissolved in 1935 because of repression by the Japanese imperialists. p. 324

19. **The movement to "defend justice and wipe out evils"**–An anti-aggression movement launched by patriotic Confucian scholars who were opposed to capitalist aggressors from Europe and the United States in late 18th century. As the Japanese imperialists' aggression of Korea was stepped up in the late 19th century, some of the patriots participated in the anti-Japanese volunteer movement. p. 387

20. **The peasant war of 1894**–A war fought by the peasants in Jolla Province against the feudal rulers and Japanese aggressors (1894-1895). p. 390

*Printed in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea*